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THE TRAGIC QUEEN



MARY STEWART, AGED 16
From a painting in the Duke of Devonshire's Collection

THE TRAGIC QUEEN

A STUDY OF MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

by
ANDREW DAKERS

AUTHOR OF
“ROBERT BURNS: HIS LIFE AND GENIUS,” “OLIVER CROMWELL”

There beats no heart on either border
Wherethrough the north blasts blow,
But keeps your memory as a warder
His beacon fire aglow.

A. C. SWINBURNE.

The evil that men do livos after them,
The good is oft interred with their bones.

SHAKESPEARE.

WITH FRONTISPICE AND SEVEN
OTHER ILLUSTRATIONS

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TO
JAMES PRYDE
IN
FRIENDSHIP
AND
GRATITUDE

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I. THE RELENTLESS TRIUMVIRATE		13
II. THE STRUGGLE FOR TOLERATION		28
III. "OUR GOOD SISTER"		39
IV. "THE BRAW GALLANT"		56
V. PRELUDE TO DISASTER		84
VI. THE TRIUMPH OF MORAY		100
VII. THE CASKET CANARD		121
VIII. ELIZABETH HONOURS HER PROMISES		140
IX. THE SPANISH ILLUSION		157
X. IN SHREWSBURY'S KEEPING		167
XI. THE BREWER'S BUNG-HOLE		196
XII. THE SON OF MARY		213
XIII. FARCE AT FOTHERINGHAY		218
XIV. ELIZABETH ENDS THE WORK		249
BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE		263
APPENDIX		
A. CRAWFORD'S DEPOSITION		265
B. LETTER II OF THE CASKET SERIES		269
C. TEXT OF THE SCANDAL LETTER		277

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

		<i>Frontispiece</i>	
		FACING PAGE	
MARY STEWART, AGED 16	
MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS	16
HENRY LORD DARNLEY	48
THE MURDER OF RICCIO	64
SIR WILLIAM MAITLAND OF LETHINGTON	128
JAMES STEWART, 14TH EARL OF MORAY	152
MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS, IN IMPRISONMENT	176
QUEEN ELIZABETH	244

THE TRAGIC QUEEN

CHAPTER ONE

THE RELENTLESS TRIUMVIRATE

§I

MARY STEWART, granddaughter of Henry VII of England, and daughter of James V of Scotland and Mary of Guise, became Queen of Scots when she was a week old, on the death of her father after the disastrous battle of Solway Moss. She was sent to France at the age of five to be affianced to Francis, the infant Dauphin of France. On August 19th, 1561, when she was eighteen, she returned to Scotland to take into her hands the reins of government. She had been, by that time, a widow for eight months, an orphan for a year, Queen-Consort of France for seventeen months, and a married woman for over three years.

After four years of relative peace, she married her cousin, Henry Darnley, son of the Earl of Lennox, heir after herself to the English throne, and a close claimant to the Scottish crown. Eleven months later she gave birth to a son, who became James VI of Scotland and I of England. Her second husband was murdered when their son was eight months old by the Earl of Bothwell, acting on behalf of a group of the leading nobles who had banded themselves to kill him.

Mary had been a widow for the second time only ten weeks when she was abducted and raped by Bothwell, and, in consequence of this, felt herself compelled to marry him three weeks later. Her nobles, who had

almost unanimously suggested Bothwell to her as husband, rose in revolt, forced her to abandon him a month after the marriage, and imprisoned her in the castle of Lochleven. They then compelled her to abdicate in favour of her infant son, who was crowned on July 26th, 1567; and her illegitimate brother, the Earl of Moray, was appointed Regent. After ten months in prison—during which she gave birth to stillborn twins—she escaped, raised an army, and was utterly defeated by her rebels at the battle of Langside. A fortnight after her escape, she crossed the Solway in a fishing boat to ask Elizabeth for the help against her rebels which that Queen had pledged herself to give. Elizabeth honoured her word by imprisoning her twenty-five years old cousin, and after remaining her gaoler for nineteen years, became her executioner at Fotheringhay Castle, on February 8th, 1587.

The allegations which history and legend make against the Queen of Scots are that she had relations with a French poet, named Chastelard; with a secretary, David Riccio; and with the Earl of Bothwell before her marriage to him. She is also accused of having been privy to the murder of Darnley. Other charges of immorality are alleged against her, but as they are based upon evidence as controvertible as that by which she was asserted to have borne children to the Earl of Shrewsbury, her English keeper, they are only glanced at in this study. The charge upon which she was executed was that she had conspired for the assassination of Elizabeth.

§2

Mary's training as a girl in France was principally undertaken by her maternal grandmother, and her maternal uncles, the Duke, and the Cardinal of Guise. It was designed to prepare her for her heavy tasks as Queen-Consort of France, and Queen of Scotland in her own right. Her eventual succession to the English throne was also likely according to Catholic law. She proved an apt and enthusiastic pupil both as to general culture and statecraft. At eighteen she was able to

write Latin prose and French verse as proficiently as most of her contemporaries, and was mistress of other languages. The Stewart love of music and the arts was hers, and she played more than one instrument capably; and of dancing and all games and sports she was passionately fond. As a rider to the chase she was notably intrepid and tireless; her horsemanship was superb.

All contemporaries who have recorded their impressions of her personal appearance and manner are unanimous in testifying to a beauty of face and figure that made her singular even in the company of beautiful women, and to a personal charm so winning as to be almost irresistible. Her beauty and charm would seem to have been a reflection and an emanation of a very kindly and sterling character. A sleuth among the records, seeking moral flaws, must be rewarded by a poor finding. There is, to be sure, a dubiously reported remark of Bothwell's, that she was the "Cardinal's whore," a charge which has the savour of incest for those who enjoy feasting upon the carrion of history. It is also true that one of her staunchest and dearest friends in girlhood was that beautiful and intelligent courtesan, Diane de Poictiers, but, as this friendship had the full approval of her mother, it can be assumed that the only harm that can have come to Mary from it was that she learnt that even Magdalenes have their sweetness and virtues. Such an association as this, and observation of a Court in which a Queen could be friendly with the King's mistress, must have had an effect upon Mary's outlook and judgment. There is, however, no hint—except Bothwell's—that this effect was reflected in her conduct while she was in France.

There is one blemish upon her record for statecraft, concerning which amusingly much has been made by the more bitter of her detractors. The incident occurred when she was a girl of fifteen, three weeks before her marriage with the Dauphin, when, in all matters of policy, she was naturally under the absolute influence of her not too meticulous uncles of Guise. Scottish Commissioners had been sent to France prior to the marriage, with

instructions to ensure the protection of Mary's interests and to safeguard Scottish liberties. Articles giving effect to these instructions were duly drawn up, and signed on April 15th, 1558, by herself and the Duke of Guise. Other documents, confirming these articles, were also signed some days later by Francis and Mary, as King and Queen of Scots, Dauphin and Dauphiness of France. Yet, on April 4th, Mary had signed three documents in which she (1) in the event of her leaving no issue, made over to the King of France, by free gift, the kingdom of Scotland, and all right that she had or might have in the kingdom of England; (2) made over to the French King, again in the event of her dying without issue, the kingdom of Scotland until he was repaid a million pounds, or such other sum that he might have expended in the defence of the country; and (3) that despite any articles to contrary effect that she had signed or might sign, her dispositions in favour of the Kings of France should be valid.

No satisfactory or conclusive explanation has ever been forthcoming concerning this almost incredible instance of duplicity. It can be suggested that she was a girl of fifteen at the time, guided and probably driven in such matters by the subtle Duke and Cardinal, and that they may have played upon the natural affection that she bore the country of her adoption at a time when the conduct of her Scottish subjects gave her cause to feel anything but tender towards them. The fact stands that she signed the documents with her own hand, even though she may have signed them without being made aware of their purport, or was compelled to do so by her uncles. As Mary was blessed with issue, the documents lost their significance, which, however, did not deter Elizabeth from using the fact of their existence as the cause of detaining Mary prisoner in England, when other excuses no longer availed.

The enthusiastic and unstinted testimony of Throckmorton, Elizabeth's ambassador to France, makes it clear that, by the beginning of her first widowhood, Mary was quite capable of managing affairs of State.



MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS
From a painting by François Clouet

His reports to his royal mistress of Mary's dignity, intelligence, and astuteness, when he endeavoured first to cajole her, and then, by withholding the safe-conduct to Scotland, to blackmail her into ratifying the Treaty of Edinburgh, must have been anything but pleasant and reassuring reading for Elizabeth. Throckmorton gives an insight into Mary's mind just before her departure from France, and makes it clear that she was under no illusion as to her probable fate in trusting herself to the rebel nobility of Scotland. She had just told him, in effect, that she would sail for Scotland, with or without the safe-conduct through English waters, and that if Elizabeth did succeed in getting her into her hands, the English Queen could then kill her, if that was her desire. "Peradventure," Throckmorton reports her as adding, after a pause, "that casualty might be better for me than to live. In this matter, God's will be done."

With this premonition of disaster in her consciousness, the widowed and orphaned Queen returned to her realm in her nineteenth year, to match herself against the relentless triumvirate of her enemies, equipped with beauty, intelligence, pride, and fearlessness to sustain her, and with a mixture of recklessness and impatience to contribute to the causes of her undoing.

§3

The triumvirate which joined to compass the ruin of Mary from the moment she sailed from France was composed of the fanatical John Knox, the ambitious Earl of Moray, and the virgin Queen Elizabeth, who was ably abetted by William Cecil, Lord Burghley, a political Protestant like his mistress. The conditions of the chase which assisted these hounds in the successful pursuit of their beautiful quarry were imposed by the Reformation of the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ, inaugurated by Martin Luther, and intensified by John Calvin. Osten-sibly for the furtherance of the true gospel of Christ, Knox and Elizabeth called upon others to assassinate the Scottish Queen—called, not for her just and legal execution, but for her death at the hands of an assassin. In

the end, no Jehu or Phineas arising to answer Knox's call to murder, and Sir Amyas Poulet having indignantly declined the rôle of assassin that Elizabeth wished to thrust upon him, the assassination was carried out by Elizabeth's headsman.

The animosity of these three enemies had already been fully demonstrated when Mary, defying them all, landed at Leith, on August 19th, 1561. Her voyage from France had ended successfully only because of a dense fog which, enduring for two days, had enabled her vessels to elude the watchful cruisers of Elizabeth, the commanders of which had been instructed to intercept and capture her. The reason for this cousinly attention of the English Queen was that Mary had declined to ratify the Treaty of Edinburgh, which her rebels had concluded with England after the death of Mary of Guise, which had terminated her gallant struggle to keep the throne safe for her daughter. In this treaty the Scottish rebels had agreed to the renunciation of Mary's just claim and right to the English throne, as part of the price they had been prepared to pay for the help which Elizabeth had sent them to effect the defeat and deposition of Mary of Guise from the Regency. It is true that Elizabeth, with her genius for saving her face when treachery had miscarried, sent to Mary the safe-conduct that she had previously refused, by a messenger who arrived in Edinburgh four days after the voyage for which it had been required had been accomplished.

As to John Knox, the fact that Mary was a Catholic was sufficient cause for his hate. Everyone who was not of his Elect was damned eternally, anyhow, and it was a conclusion of the simplest logic that the Queen was doubly damned, and, therefore, not only unfit to be the sovereign over God's people, but fit only to be destroyed by the activities of the assassin, as had been the habit in the time of Jehu, the era to which Knox spiritually belonged. He had chuckled with peculiar glee when both Francis II, Mary's boy husband, and her mother had died. Of the death of Francis he wrote: "Lo! the potent hand of God from above sends unto us a wonder-

ful and most joyous deliverance ; for unhappy Francis, husband of our Sovereign, sudden perisheth of a rotten ear—that deaf ear that could never hear the truth of God."

When the Queen-Regent was ill, Knox took upon himself to pronounce upon her the judgment of God. " Within a few days after, yea some say that very day," he wrote, alluding to the date of his divine pronouncement, " began her belly and loathesome legs to swell, and so continued till that God did execute His judgment upon her." It is unfortunate for his reputation as an honest historian, and for his integrity as a prophet, that it is known that the Queen-Regent had written to D'Oysell, her commander-in-chief, some days before this judgment was called down, telling him that she was suffering from dropsy. " One of my legs," she wrote, " begins to swell. You know there are but three days for the dropsy in this country." Clearly, if God was executing His judgment on this gentle and heroic lady, He had begun to do so without the prompting of His self-appointed prophet.

Although Mary had escaped capture by the English cruisers only because the fog had rendered visibility bad, Knox was at no loss to persuade the vagary of the elements to serve his hate of the Queen. " The very face of heaven," he wrote, " the time of her arrival did manifestly speak what comfort was brought into this country with her—to wit, sorrow, dolour, darkness, and all impiety ; for in the memory of man, that day of the year, was never seen a more dolorous face of the heaven, than was at her arrival. The sun was not seen to shine two days before, nor two after. That forewarning God gave us ; but, alas, the most part were blind."

The Queen, while she was living in France, had appreciated how dangerous a man Knox was, and had expressed her intention of exiling him ; and she had not been home a fortnight before she found it necessary to send for him on account of a sermon he had preached against her celebration of the Mass. This famous interview, in which the Queen upheld the policy of

toleration for Catholics and Protestants alike, and Knox maintained the doctrine that all Catholics should be persecuted, earned the Reformer a reputation of being a very courageous man for daring to speak his mind to the eighteen years old Queen. The plain fact must be stated that, despite his advocacy of a persecuting policy, Knox himself had always run away from persecution, and that he had candidly admitted a modest doubt as to his ripeness for martyrdom. For all his much-vaunted courage in speaking fearlessly, and often with boorishness, "to the pleasing face of a gentlewoman," and his boast that "he had looked in the faces of many angry men, and yet not been afraid above measure,"—in spite of this, John Knox was a coward. The only suffering he endured was a term of imprisonment in French galleys as a prisoner of war, after being taken with the other rebels in St. Andrew's Castle, into which he had gone of his own free will to share its refuge with the murderers of Cardinal Beaton. On being released from the galleys, he became a licensed preacher in the Church of England, wherein he discovered that kneeling at prayer was idolatry, and the saying of responses was "mummelling." So troublesome did he become at this time, that Cranmer—who was afterwards burnt at the stake as a result of Knox's activities at a safe distance—offered to prove by ordeal-by-fire that his doctrine was "untrue, seditious and perilous, as loosing subjects from the bond of all princes' laws."

A few months after Mary Tudor had succeeded Edward VI, Knox wrote to a woman friend, afterwards his mother-in-law, that he had a foresight of troubles to come; and, one month later, he fled to France, whence he wrote to the same correspondent admitting that he did not know quite why he had run away, though "of one thing I am sure," he added, "the fear of death was not the chief cause of my fleeing." He also told the lady that his prayer, faint-hearted as he might seem, was that he might be restored to the battle again. This was a prayer that he could have answered without divine supplication, by simply taking ship back to England; but,

instead of doing this obvious thing, he contented himself, in the intervals of prayers, with writing a *Faithful Admonition to the Professors of God's Truth in England*, in which he clamoured, in thinly veiled scriptural jargon, for someone among those who had remained on the battlefield from which he had fled, to rise up like Jehu, Helias, or Phineas and assassinate Mary Tudor. The effect of this particular effort to help God's cause from the vantage-point of an onlooker, is made clear by the Protestant exiles who had fled to Geneva from the persecution that resulted from the publication of the book. These men told Calvin bluntly that this *Admonition* had added oil to the flame of persecution in England : " For before the publication of that book not one of our brethren had suffered death ; but as soon as it came forth we doubt not but that you are well aware of the number of excellent men who have perished in the flames ; to say nothing of how many other godly men have been exposed to the risk of all their property, and even life itself, on the sole ground of either having had this book in their possession or having read it."

He paid a short visit to Scotland, 1555-6, and made the acquaintance of Lord Erskine, Lord Lorne, Lord James Stewart (afterwards Earl of Moray), and other Protestant nobles who were to use him for their own ends, which fortunately for him served his own. After a few months he was summoned to Geneva by Calvin, but, before leaving Scotland, he wrote a letter to the Regent inviting her to hear the truth of God from his lips. She was reported to have referred to the letter as a *pasquil*, and Knox never forgave this flippancy. He revenged himself when he came to write his *History*, in which Mary of Guise is described as " a wanton widow," who had attempted to poison her husband, and had been Cardinal Beaton's mistress : he further hints that James V was not Mary Stewart's father. Knox was always very partial to such gossip.

He remained in Geneva, with his wife and mother-in-law, while his brother-preachers, Harlaw, Douglas, Willcock, and Methuen, started a Reformed Kirk in

Scotland, to the accompaniment of church-wrecking and pillage; for which they were put to the horn as rebels. It was now time, in the opinion of his noble allies, for Knox to return and take his share in the work and peril in the cause of God. He received their letter in May 1557, and in it the lords advisedly told him that things were now safe enough. He was frankly reluctant to answer the summons, and only arrived at Dieppe on his way to Scotland late in October. There he heard that conditions were not so safe as he had been led to believe. Winter passed and April came, and still he lingered, affecting not to know why—"The cause of my stop to this day I do not clearly understand." Danger seems always to have had a befogging effect upon his brain. Meanwhile he preached, and wrote, among other works, his preposterous *First Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstrous Regiment of Women*. Again his mythical courage is wanting. The famous *Blast* appeared without author's or printer's name, and caused so much trouble to Protestants in dangerous England that Calvin repudiated it publicly as "the reckless arrogance of one man." Undeterred by the censure of the head of his Church, he wrote an *Appellation* to the faithful in Scotland, suggesting that every Protestant had the right to punish idolaters by the law of God—a scarcely veiled hint for the assassination of Mary and her mother. Walter Myln was burnt at St. Andrews for heresy eleven months after Knox had been summoned home; the other preachers were being treated as outlaws, and still the leader of the Scottish Reformation kicked his heels in Geneva and Dieppe for another year.

He arrived at last in Edinburgh on May 3rd, 1559, being reasonably assured that the rebel nobility were now reliable custodians of his safety. Negotiations with England for help were going very well, and it was now safe for Knox to join the rebels in person as well as in spirit. The last opportunity for him to reveal his courage, before the arrival of the girl Queen, occurred in January of the following year, when the rebels were temporarily defeated. The nobles fled to Stirling; he fled to some

other place, from which he announced to a friend that he had retired to a life of study. His retirement lasted just as long as the physical force of his party was weak, which was until Elizabeth sent the forces which, in accordance with her gift for duplicity, she had assured the Queen-Regent she would never send. The physical and material power of the Reformed party was practically absolute, and out of this sense of security alone did he derive the courage to plague the newly-arrived Queen with analogies from events that had happened three thousand years earlier in an Asiatic kingdom, in an attempt to prove that subjects were justified in taking the sword against their princes.

The Earl of Moray's hate of his half-sister was for some time so subtly dissembled that he is to this day regarded by many people as the "bonny earl" of the ballad, rather than as the treacherous glutton for power that events prove him to have been. When, after the deposition of Mary of Guise, the rebel nobility were plotting with Elizabeth for the overthrow of the legitimate Stewart dynasty, they offered the Earl of Arran to her as husband. The intention was that, the Earl of Arran being heir after Mary, Elizabeth would support his claim and dispossess Mary. Arran, who was to die insane, was already mentally deficient, and Elizabeth declined his suit, as Moray had never doubted she would do. He then had it suggested to Elizabeth that she should support his claim to the throne, as a good Protestant, enriched by the revenues of two Catholic priories, in order to keep Scotland from the evil of being ruled by a Catholic Queen.

The death of Francis brought these negotiations to a halt, and Moray was sent to France to "gropé Mary's mind" as the envoy of the Protestant party. Both on his way to France, and while returning from this mission, he had long conversations with Elizabeth; and there is good ground to suspect that he approved of, if he did not originate, the plan for capturing and imprisoning Mary on her way home. There is the prelude to the good intentions of Moray towards the Queen with which he

has been credited, because he had the intelligence to play the waiting game, and risk the defeat of his ambitious schemes rather by caution than by foolhardiness or prematurity of action. It can be pleaded in his favour that it may have been resentment at having been born a king's son by one of his mistresses, and the consequent stigma of illegitimacy, that made him act as he did towards his sister, who had been so fortunate as to be born in lawful wedlock.

§4

When, despite these plots to steal her throne, the pressure brought to bear upon her to remain in France and rule Scotland through a Regent, and the attempt to capture her, Mary presented her enemies with the *fait accompli* of her presence in Holyrood Palace, they were forced to trim their sails to the new course imposed upon them by her intrepidity. Elizabeth and Lord James Stewart (as Moray then was) both dissembled their true feelings and intentions under a show of friendliness, which they maintained just as long as events compelled them to. John Knox contented himself with preaching against the Queen's celebration of the Mass, and inflaming his hearers against her.

They had malleable material on which to work in a nobility which has been truthfully summed up by Andrew Lang, thus : "The nobles and lairds, many of them, were converted in matters of doctrine ; in conduct they were the most avaricious, bloody and treacherous of all the generations which had banded, revelled, robbed and betrayed in Scotland." It was from such a congerie of unprincipled nobles that Mary had to choose her advisers and her Privy Council. Her mother, having given them a trial and having suffered disillusion, had appointed Frenchmen to advise her, rather than continue to be victimised by their persistent treachery. Converted in doctrine as they may have alleged themselves to be, their chief anxiety in abolishing Catholicism, and in rushing through the Acts for the establishment of Knox's Kirk, had been to retain in their hands the wealth and lands

which they had seized from the old Church. The majority of the men who gave Knox the political power necessary for the legalising of his Kirk were simple robbers, and most of that majority were apostates in the cause of spoil.

The only man who approximated to a Scottish patriot was young Maitland of Lethington, and, although he had deserted her mother in the end and had conspired with Elizabeth to provide the means for her overthrow, it was upon him, and her dissembling bastard brother, that Mary's choice of advisers fell. She would have liked to have had the Earl of Bothwell with her in council, but his enemies among the nobles—Lord James the most bitter of them all—were too strong for him, even with her favour; so she had to allow him to go back to France. The bitter enmity in which this border chief was held derived generally from his scrupulous loyalty to Mary of Guise, and particularly from his enterprise in having intercepted a thousand pounds of Elizabeth's gold, which Cockburn of Ormistoun had been conveying to the rebel chiefs. Among all the powerful nobles, only Bothwell could be relied upon, on the evidence of past actions, to be loyal to his Queen—and he was a Protestant. The Earl of Huntly, the most powerful of her Catholic subjects, who had sent Bishop Lesley to her in France with a promise to back her with twenty thousand troops if she would land at Aberdeen and made a bid for the Catholic restoration—he was shifty and untrustworthy; and there were rumours that he had intolerable secret pretensions which moved him to make this offer. Morton, Lennox, Argyll, Atholl, Ruthven, Lindsay, Kirkcaldy, Glencairn, Boyd, Ochiltree—there was not one of them but would set his own ends and ambitions before those of Scotland and his Queen. The majority of them had been privy to the forgery of the royal seals of Francis and herself, with which they had given a spurious simulation of royal assent to their harsh acts against the Catholics, making carting, branding, exile and death the penalties for being present at, or celebrating, the Mass.

Mary, with sovereign sagacity, before leaving France,

had pardoned them all for their rebellion and treachery against the Regent, her mother ; and had declared her intention that bygones should be bygones. She knew well enough that their submission would last only until opportunity should serve their self-interest ; but, having refused to treat them as her enemies, she had robbed them of excuse for a new rebellion. She had, in short, put the erstwhile rebels under an obligation and upon what honour they had. She had, in doing this, tied her own hands, by making it impossible for her to repeal the anti-Catholic Acts. To have done this would have been to give the Lords an excuse to start a new civil war in the name of religion, though actually for the preservation of their Church loot. She was determined, nevertheless, to use all the power and influence that she possessed to prevent the victimisation of her Catholic subjects. Perforce and by inclination, she would allow the Reformers to worship God in their own way—she had told Throckmorton that “she intended to constrain no man’s conscience”—but the Catholics must have a like right. The sincerity of her policy of religious toleration has been doubted because, later, she made some efforts to bring about a Catholic restoration ; and from this it has been argued that she would have taken a leaf out of Knox’s book of Christian policy, and condemned Protestants with the same persecuting rigour as he wished to practise upon Papists. This argument can only be substantiated by prejudice. It was because she showed no tendency to placate the extremists among the Catholics by pursuing a policy that should have as its end the overthrow and oppression of the Reformed religion, that Catholic and Protestants have united to doubt whether Mary Stewart was a devout Catholic. The repudiation of that charge may be left to the unfolding of events.

It is for casuists to condemn a girl of eighteen, surrounded by a band of bloody, avaricious, and treacherous nobles, for having failed to give full effect to the policy of religious toleration which she announced on her arrival. These bandit nobles were not personally anxious for the persecution of the Catholics ; they were content

that they should be kept politically impotent. So long as this condition of weakness was maintained in the party they had plundered, their stolen property was safe. Their private lives and their public deeds have only to be studied to reveal the quality of their salvation.

CHAPTER TWO

THE STRUGGLE FOR TOLERATION

MARY'S foreboding that religion would be the crucial problem to confront her on reaching Scotland was swiftly and clearly justified. Religion dominated domestic politics, and was the most powerful influence upon the conduct of foreign affairs. The Reformed party were still drunk with their heady and sudden success. They were determined to apply the tyranny of the Book of Discipline without mercy or compromise, and to enforce the anti-Catholic Acts with rigour. Until the arrival of the Queen, there had seemed to exist nothing to interrupt the campaign of persecution, which had had its genesis in the defacement and destruction of most of the important sacred buildings in the southern half of the country. They had almost absolute power, and only the failure of the predatory nobles to be infected by the extremity of Knox's feverish zeal had prevented the wholesale spoiling of the lives of the Catholic community, as well as their property. The Queen's Catholic subjects were impoverished, oppressed, and terrified, practising their religion in secret, with the fear of exile or death as the reward for their spiritual fidelity.

Lord James Stewart had insisted, against the fanaticism of the preachers, that the Queen, on her return, should suffer no interference personally in the practice of her religion, and that she should be allowed to celebrate the Mass in private unmolested. With the exception of one or two hotheads, the Lords of the Congregation, as the Protestant nobles were termed, were willing to grant this concession ; and as Knox was helpless without their support, the preachers were overruled.

It is understandable that Knox should have been angered by the effect of his sovereign's return upon his schemes. It postponed, and ultimately rendered impossible, his Old Testament picnic of smiting and slaying in which, by virtue of his Acts of Parliament, he proposed to drive Catholics and Catholicism out of Scotland for ever. He spoke the literal truth when he stated in his sermon, attacking the Queen's first Mass, that the celebration of a single Mass in the land was more awful than if ten thousand men had landed for the express purpose of destroying the Reformed religion with fire and sword. The presence of the Queen, with her policy of non-constraint of conscience, and with the courage to refuse to be constrained in her own conscience, created a force against tyranny more potent than fire and sword.

Mary was not, however, permitted to have her Mass in peace. There was a disturbance, in which candles were snatched from a priest, and only the presence of Lord James Stewart before the chapel door prevented the zealots from breaking in upon the celebration. The Queen instantly consulted her Privy Council as to the means for preventing a repetition of this outrage, and next day she issued a Proclamation, declaring that she intended to take a final order, which she hoped would content all, for pacifying the differences of religion; insisting meanwhile upon the maintenance of the state and form of religion which Her Majesty found public and standing at her arrival in her realm: and further commanding that none should molest or trouble any of her domestic servants or other persons who had come with her from France, for any cause whatsoever, upon pain of death.

Except for John Knox's fulminations in the pulpit, and her attempt to win him over, in conversation, to her heresy of toleration, the Proclamation was effective in leaving the Queen in comparative peace to practise her religion privately. There is ground to suspect that the action of the Lords in accommodating the Queen in this matter was largely inspired by a hope, entertained by Lethington and others, that, in course of time, she might

be persuaded to renounce Catholicism and adopt the Reformed religion. This hope was, on the face of it, a reasonably realisable one. Elizabeth had been a practising Catholic until she ascended the throne, and had turned Protestant when she saw that her interests were best served by doing so. Her henchman, the astute Cecil, had worn a rosary and muttered his prayers in public for safety during Mary Tudor's reign, yet he was now a good Protestant. And if Mary needed other examples of religious apostacy inspired by personal interest, she had only to look round at those sitting at her Council table. For Mary to turn Protestant was, by the average political morality of the time, the obvious thing to do. Her own Church was impoverished, and its practice illegal—though dubiously so. She would surely apprehend in a year or two that it was on the Protestant side that her bread was buttered. It was preposterous that she should hold on to the Catholic Church as it was, and had been, in Scotland ; with priests, friars, and bishops keeping concubines and their families openly, and nuns bearing children with as little shame. Its own dissoluteness and internal rot condemned it without taking account of the abominable idolatry of the Mass, and the abuse of pardons and indulgences. Had not her own mother recognised the need for a reformation of manners and practice in that Church, and appealed to Rome to see to it? These considerations were doubtless in the minds of the Lords as they speculated upon the influences that might cause the Queen to change her religion. The case of Preacher Paul Methuen, one of the founders of the Reformed Kirk, who was excommunicated by the General Assembly for having seduced his wife's domestic, was doubtless carefully kept from the Queen's ears.

If it be assumed that Mary, as a conscientious monarch, did examine the Confession of Faith and the Book of Discipline, which were the manuals of the Reformed Kirk, it could not have been easy for her to discover in what respects it was superior to the one she was asked to renounce. The mystery of the Holy Communion, the

Mass, which was the bull of the target against which Knox launched his shafts, must have seemed different only in the simplification of the ritual which accompanied its celebration. "The faithful, in the right use of the Lord's table, so do eat the body and drink the blood of the Lord Jesus that He remains in them and they in Him . . . in such conjunction with Christ Jesus as the natural man cannot comprehend." This differed in expression, but hardly at all in its essential meaning, from the Catholic rite; so why should Knox speak of "gods for mice to nibble at," when referring to the reserved wafers? Again, this new Church had in use a form of excommunication that differed from that of Rome only in the fact of the person who should pronounce it. As to the forgiveness of sins, Knox maintained of himself and his original six or seven preachers: "Doubt we nothing but that our Church, and the true ministers of the same, have the power which our Master, Jesus Christ, granted to His apostles in these words, 'Whose sins ye shall forgive, shall be forgiven, and whose sins ye shall retain, shall be retained.'"

According to the Book of Discipline, the men to whom these powers were granted were required to have no training, hardly even a special vocation, since they were to be selected by "the public approbation of the people and declaration of the chief minister." The highest human gifts—of music, painting, sculpture—were idolatrous and abominable, it appeared, if applied to the worship and glory of God. All feast days, including Christmas, were also evil, and swept away, together with all the saints whose intercession had been implored by the faithful for centuries. Structurally the Reformed religion must have been almost repellent to one who appreciated the inner meaning of the august and venerable ceremonies of the Catholic Church, in the growth and perfection of which piety had reverently enlisted the services of all who had the capacity to make the form of Church and service approximate physically to the divine beauty that it was sought to symbolise.

The doctrine of Calvin probably appeared to Mary as

an almost exact reversion to pre-Christian Judaism, in which, in place of the Jews, the Elect became God's chosen people. By temperament and training she was incapable of accepting a doctrine according to which the majority of human souls were born irrevocably predestined to eternal damnation. On the purely religious side, there was, in Knox's extension of Calvinism, little temptation to a Catholic who was convinced that, whatever sicknesses might be temporarily afflicting the body of her Church, its heart was sound and its health capable of restoration.

If, as she was so strongly urged to do, Mary had gone over to the Reformed Kirk, she would have had difficulty in functioning as a Christian ruler. She would have had to accept the negation of Christ's command to preach the gospel to every creature, by sanctioning Knox's command to force the gospel on every creature on pain of exile and death. She would have had to practise persecution as a Christian duty ; she would have had to approve Knox's Act for the execution of all adulteresses, and ignore the meaning of Christ's tenderness to the woman of Samaria and the woman taken in adultery. On the other hand, she would have had to accept a denial of the command to render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, or, at least, to modify it to read that one should only render unto Cæsar that which was Cæsar's, if Cæsar practised the religion that the tributary approved. She would have had to admit that : "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake ; for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven," was contradictory nonsense ; and act upon Knox's dictum : "Blessed are they which persecute for righteousness' sake . . ."

It is true enough that the Catholic Church persecuted as cruelly as any other persecuting force in Christian history ; but it did not compel rulers to persecute, in the sense in which Knox would have persecuted, had he had the courage and the power. Knox dominated the politico-religious forces of Scotland, and Mary's submission to the Reformed Kirk would have entailed her submission to him.

Mary's religious policy may well have been influenced by her native tenderness and compassion for the poor and oppressed, as well as by her personal conviction in the matter of faith. She detested cruelty, whether the sufferers were the galley-slaves for whom she pleaded on her voyage from France, or Catholic priests and worshippers. Even those who accept as authentic the notorious Glasgow letter to Bothwell have to acknowledge that she was party to Darnley's murder only with loathing and revulsion from the cruel horror of the deed.

The fact that she accepted wholeheartedly Lethington's policy for an Anglo-Scottish alliance at the outset of her reign establishes with certainty that her devotion to Catholicism was personal rather than political. The one obstacle to making such an alliance mutual and enduring was the fact that the Scottish Queen was a Catholic. This will become clear when the negotiations between Mary and Elizabeth are considered. It could only have been personal devotion to her Church that prevented Mary from following Elizabeth's example and applying to Scotland the English religious policy. In following that course she would have secured the loyal support of her self-interested but powerful Protestant nobles, and would have won the friendship of England, by removing the fears of Elizabeth, from which sprang that Queen's lifelong enmity. It is true that, by adopting this course, she would have alienated herself from France and Spain; but so long as antagonistic Catherine of Medici was a power in France, her daughter-in-law could hope for little advantage from that country's nominal friendship, while the advantages of an English alliance would have more than outbalanced the loss of Spanish friendship. It was chiefly Mary's fine, if obstinate loyalty to the Church which she thought "most acceptable to God," that prevented her reign from being peaceful and prosperous. It could be argued that, as a reigning sovereign, she had as little right to allow her personal predilections in religion to stand in the way of national policy, as she would have had to insist upon a love match as against a necessary political marriage. Such an argument,

however, would have to ignore the fact that, while morganatic marriages were accepted (at least for male monarchs), mankind has not yet ventured to tolerate morganaticism in religion. To tamper with human sacraments may be tolerable, but to pretend toward God must always be base and foul.

The political and material predominance of the leaders of the Reformed party incapacitated Mary from making any constructive attempt "to take a final order which would content all for pacifying the differences of religion." She stated her religious policy, clearly and unconditionally. She desired neither the oppression of Reformers by Catholics, nor the oppression of Catholics by Reformers. She desired only that all men should have the legal right to worship God according to their consciences. Of all the monarchs called upon by destiny to rule nations during the exciting and disturbing period of the Reformation, Mary Stewart was singular in advocating such a policy of religious toleration. Her personal inability to accept the doctrines of Knox awakened in her no desire to persecute those who did not share this inability. She was not allowed to give effect to her policy, because the religious leader of Scotland was a declared persecutor; because her dissembling half-brother knew that the adoption of such a policy would ruin his ambition to supplant her; and because her nominally Protestant nobles could not agree to any arrangement that would tend to restore their Catholic victims to a share of political power.

The sincerity of Mary's intention in this matter was clearly demonstrated by her uncompromising assault upon the Earl of Huntly, the most powerful Catholic nobleman in Scotland. He had offered to support her with an army to effect a Catholic restoration. At a price, he was prepared to establish Mary as a Scottish Bloody Mary. If she had had any inclination to fill such a rôle, he gave her the opportunity which might easily have availed her to that end. She had put his temptation behind her while she was still in France; had refused the best chance that she was ever likely to have to establish, by

force, constraint upon men's consciences—constraint such as Knox was practising.

Hunly's disappointment at the Queen's refusal was bitter. When Mary made her first progress through the Highlands, over which he ruled like a king, he and his sons had the temerity to defy her, and to seek to put into action their schemes for getting her into their hands and forcing her to accept a Gordon for husband. This was to be at once his revenge, and his alternative, for her rejection of his offer of armed support. To the Gordons must be given the distinction of having been the first to plan the abduction—if not the seduction—of the Queen.

Some authorities are of opinion that the suppression of the Gordons was subtly inspired by Lord James Stewart, who was rewarded with the earldom of Moray during the progress of the Queen's campaign against them. It is certain that Moray had cause for satisfaction in the outcome, which deprived his Catholic antagonists of their most powerful lay leader; and he probably realised much more vividly than the Queen, that she had played into the hands of the Reformed party. Mary was too intelligent, however, not to be fully conscious of all the bearings and effects of this action; but consequences, when they clashed with principles, had no effect upon her puissant spirit. The Gordons had shown themselves as rebels and traitors to her, as Queen of the realm, and her action in suppressing rebellion and executing traitors was that of a sovereign determined to rule despite threats, even from her most powerful subject. The fact that Hunly was also a Catholic made her in no way tender or lenient to him as a rebel, valuable as she might have found his help later, had she chosen to compromise with her princely rights and duties.

The only actions that Mary was able to take in pursuance of her policy of religious toleration were, by the compulsion of the circumstances, such as makes it a simple task to make out a case that her policy was simply a mask to disguise an underlying determination to effect a full Catholic restoration. The Catholics were in need of protection and assistance; the Reformers were not; and,

in consequence, everything she sought, and was able to do, was done on behalf of her oppressed co-religionists. Her first act had been to issue the proclamation to protect the priests and servants who had come with her from France, and who had been assaulted by brawlers during her celebration of the Mass. Her Protestant Privy Council had made it clear to lesser governing bodies and officials in authority, by their assent to that Proclamation, that further interference with the Queen's private devotions would not be tolerated. She had, however, to endure other instances of rowdyism and insult by fanatical Reformers during her first brief progress, at Stirling and Perth. During her absence, the zealous provost and bailies of Edinburgh decided that, though they might not bite, they would bark. The Queen, who had now been in Scotland for five weeks, found, on her return from her fortnight's progress, that Edinburgh had been plastered with a six months' old proclamation, which charged "all monks, friars, priests, nuns, adulterers, fornicators, and all such filthy persons to remove themselves of this town and bounds thereof within twenty-four hours, under pain of carting through the town, burning on the cheek, and banishing the same for ever."

The Queen could not have been of gentle blood if she had failed to resent the open insult to the Catholics embodied in this coupling of priests with adulterers and fornicators. She understood clearly that the Proclamation was directly intended to warn her that her coming had not wrought any change in the Reformers' intention to enforce the anti-Catholic Acts. Her retort was immediate and effective. A counter-Proclamation was at once issued, making the town patent to all her lieges; the responsible provost and bailies were dismissed and others elected in their place. Knox's comment upon this action of the Queen was characteristic: "And so murderers, adulterers, whores, drunkards, idolaters, and all malefactors got protection under the Queen's wings, under that colour because they were of her religion. And so got the Devil freedom again, where that before he durst not have been seen in daylight upon the common streets."

It is also characteristic of Knox, as to accuracy, that three of the types of sinners that he mentions are not referred to in the Proclamation which offended the Queen. He usually adhered to the theory that over-statement makes for emphasis.

This prompt and determin'd display of her intention to prevent persecution had the desired effect, and as long as Mary had power, no serious attempt was made to give full effect to the laws against the Catholics. Whatever may be the truth regarding Mary Stewart in other respects, it is manifest that, as a girl of eighteen and for five years afterwards, she succeeded in standing successfully against the fanaticism of Knox and his noble supporters, as a shield between her Catholic subjects and their persecuting zeal. For a man who advocated persecution with such vociferous sincerity, John Knox proved himself, after Mary's coming, as a singularly weak and ineffective instrument of the wrath of God. To be credited a man should act upon, as well as preach, his beliefs. The Queen died for her religion ; John Knox ran away for his.

Time has justified the religious policy of the Queen of Scots, and has utterly discredited that of Knox. The toleration that is now practised in England and Scotland is precisely that which Mary advocated on her arrival in Scotland. Her attitude was in harmony with the spirit of the New Testament, and she was the first royal spokesman of a Christian solution of the religious problems created by the Reformation. Those who hold that her attitude was compelled by circumstances, must prove that she gained anything by adopting it. Had she tried to suppress and uproot Protestantism in Scotland, that country could not have treated her more hardly than it did. Her character was one of singular beauty, even allowing for the heavy charges that have been alleged against her. Her state of mind on her voyage to Scotland, guessing that death might be better than to live as Queen, is well known, and yet she was able to put aside her pre-occupations in order to see that the conditions of the galley-slaves were lightened. Her generosity to the poor was unlimited ; and, once, learning that the causes of the

poor were delayed by the actions of the great in the courts, she ordered the Lords of Session to sit "both forenoon and afternoon three days a week," and made a point of attending the sittings for the hearing of the causes of the poor. She was a devoted nurse to her three husbands when they were sick; and to her servants she was a notably kind and generous mistress. On her way to the scaffold, she forgave and prayed for all her enemies in words the sincerity of which it was impossible to doubt. Despite the number of her political and religious foes, she seems rarely to have experienced personal dislike. Never, before bullying preacher, howling mob, rebel armies, angry gaolers, judges or headsman, was her superb courage known to fail her for an instant, or her dignity to desert her. Since tenderness, charity, courage and dignity can be unquestionably accorded her, as qualities manifesting spontaneously and not as compelled by difficult circumstances, there can be no honest ground for doubting that her toleration was also sincere.

CHAPTER THREE

"OUR GOOD SISTER"

§I

WHEN Mary Tudor died, Henri II of France, and the Guise brothers, caused the Royal Arms of England to be added to the bearings of the Dauphiness, Mary, and publicly proclaimed her Queen of England. These champions made no active effort to translate the proclamation into an open bid for the English throne on Mary's behalf. This assumption of the English arms and the proclamation did, however, challenge Elizabeth's right to the English succession. This challenge could be upheld by Catholic law, according to which Elizabeth was illegitimate ; and Mary Stewart was the lawful heir to the throne. Elizabeth was protected up to a point, and, as it proved in the event, quite effectively, by the measures taken by Henry VIII to ensure the legality of that right. This open challenge made on Mary's behalf by her French relatives was the fundamental cause of Elizabeth's enmity, which first blossomed into action when she actively supported the rebel Lords against Mary's mother, the Regent of Scotland ; and in refusing the Scottish Queen the safe-conduct through English waters. Elizabeth was simply obeying the instinct of self-preservation, and was indifferent to the means she employed to that end. The beautiful young widow, of whose mental and social equipment she had received such excellent reports from her ambassador, was an excellent match for any bold Catholic prince. She was undisputed Queen of Scotland, had powerful connections and friends in France, and was regarded by the Catholics as the rightful occupant of the English throne.

The English Queen had had good reason to believe that this challenge to her right of succession had been finally met and defeated when, a few weeks after the Queen-Regent's death, Cecil himself had gone to Scotland, and concluded the Treaty of Edinburgh with the rebel Lords. The wily Secretary had inserted and obtained acceptance of a clause by which Mary renounced for ever any right she had, or might think she had, to the throne of England. This treaty had been sent to Mary and Francis for ratification, but it remained unratified for the very good reason that neither Mary nor her advisers saw any just cause why she should part with rights which were indisputably hers, according to their arguments, despite the will of Henry VIII, on which, incidentally, his signature was impressed by a stamp. This will, which, apart from the irregularity of the signature, was doubtfully valid in a constitutional sense, was the principal instrument upon which the dispossession of Mary could be founded. The widowed Queen could not be cajoled or bullied into ratification when Bedford was sent to her in France for this purpose; nor could she be shaken from her stand by the threat of capture and its consequences which was embodied in Elizabeth's angry refusal of the safe-conduct. A letter from Lord James Stewart to Elizabeth, promising a policy of Anglo-Scottish amity, may have had something to do with the English Queen's sudden abandonment of the crude means she was using in her attempt to browbeat the fearless Mary into ratification. She, or Cecil, probably realised that such open hostility as the safe-conduct episode manifested was calculated only to drive the Scottish Queen to adopt an antagonist course, and to make a marriage through which she would acquire the power to decide the succession question by the arbitrament of arms. A share of the thrones of England and Scotland was a prize that more than one Continental prince could be relied upon to covet, and to take unusual risks to obtain. So, the safe-conduct for the voyage to Scotland arrived four days after the Queen had arrived there.

Mary's foreign policy, at the outset of her reign, was

influenced and directed almost exclusively by Maitland of Lethington and Lord James Stewart ; and in order to realise how destitute she was of reliable and disinterested advisers, one or two observations regarding these two men are necessary. The overthrow of the Queen-Regent was the direct result of Lethington deserting her, and going over to the rebels. It was he who obtained Elizabeth's naval and military help ; and it was he whose brilliant brain inspired and directed the negotiations with Elizabeth for the usurpation of Mary's throne by the Earl of Arran, or Lord James. Lethington was, however, a patriot, and these activities were not aimed at Mary personally, nor were they inspired by any animosity towards her. He simply wished to prevent Scotland from becoming a province of France. This danger seemed real at the time he deserted the Regent, but it was minimised by the death of Francis II. He was regarded by Elizabeth as the most considerable statesman in Scotland, and he pursued undeviatingly a policy of amity with England, as the only one that would enable Scotland to regain its prosperity, and maintain its safety.

Lord James Stewart, in accepting Mary's trust, was simply biding his time. The death of Francis, followed by Mary's determination to return to her realm, had postponed indefinitely the fulfilment of his ambition either to usurp her throne, or occupy it as Regent in her absence. He was the leader of the rebel Protestant Lords, and, after his interviews with Throckmorton when he was in France, probing Mary's mind, he had been strongly recommended to Elizabeth by that ambassador as the man who should be given her aid to supplant Mary. He was a precise member of Knox's Kirk, and was on intimate terms of friendship with the Reformer. He had, however, dissembled to Mary, whose childhood playmate he had been ; and she trusted in his sincerity until his cautious opportunism seized the chance that enabled him to throw aside his mask.

Mary can have had no illusions about Lethington, since she had read her mother's account of him in a sort of *Who's Who* of the Scottish nobles which had been sent

to her before the Regent's death. He was, however, the most brilliant, and the least bad of a bad bunch. Her own ideas for foreign policy coincided with his and Lord James's, and she worked in harmony with them. This policy aimed at a friendly alliance with England and the personal amity of Elizabeth ; but, immediately they began to practise it, they were arrested by that long bone of contention, the Treaty of Edinburgh. Lethington went to England to deal with Elizabeth, and Sir Peter Mewtas was sent on a mission of persuasion to Mary.

The dilemma that stood in the way of ratification is capable of simple statement. Elizabeth feared that Mary, if ever she was powerful enough to do so, would drive her from the English throne on the ground of her illegitimacy, according to Catholic law, and ascend it herself as the lawful heir. To kill that fear was the purpose of the debated clause of the Treaty. Mary, on her side, insisted that, before she was asked to renounce her claim to that throne—which would have amounted to admitting the legitimacy of Elizabeth's title—Elizabeth should formally declare her to be the successor in the event of the English Queen dying without issue.

The obstacle in the way of this otherwise reasonable basis of a fair and satisfactory settlement of the differences between the two Queens, was the fact that Mary was a Catholic. A great part of the population of England were still Catholics, and a large number were, in the interests of safety, pseudo-Protestants, or worshippers who conformed outwardly to the Church of England, but remained faithful Catholics in soul. This considerable proportion of Elizabeth's subjects would have preferred a Catholic ruler, and doubtless some of the zealots among them subscribed to Knox's theory of the rightness of assassination in the cause of religion. It was because of her awareness to this situation that Elizabeth was moved to insist that to agree to the proposal of naming Mary as her successor would be tantamount to preparing her own winding-sheet, and making her grave ready. So long as it remained doubtful who should succeed her, Elizabeth's life was reasonably safe from a Catholic assassin ; and it would be

still safer if Mary could be persuaded formally to declare that she admitted Elizabeth's occupancy of the throne to be valid, by surrendering her real, or believed, right to it.

The problem could have been settled without difficulty if Mary could have been persuaded to abandon Catholicism. Once Mary became a Protestant, she would have repudiated automatically the Catholic view that Elizabeth was illegitimate, and have sundered herself from Catholic France and Spain, by whose help only could she hope successfully to challenge Elizabeth's title. Further, she would have removed the chief cause of Elizabeth's reluctance to name Mary as her successor in the event of her dying childless—the fear of assassination.

Protracted negotiations were carried on between Cecil and Lethington, but, brilliant and subtle diplomatists as they both were, they failed utterly to arrive at any sort of compromise that would satisfy both parties. As a fact, a settlement was impossible so long as Elizabeth's fear of assassination, and Mary's loyalty to Catholicism, persisted.

Mewtas's mission failed, and he returned to London with nothing more hopeful than a suggestion from Mary that new commissioners should be appointed to discuss such matters in the Treaty as concerned her only. Elizabeth was in no mind for a new commission, and offered to discuss Mary's reasons for refusing ratification, privately, either by letter, or by Randolph, her ambassador in Scotland. Mary replied to the effect that she believed that the sincere and unceremonious dealing in the matter, which was the most promising avenue to a settlement, could best be achieved by a meeting between the two Queens. Meanwhile the sterile duel of wits between Lethington and Cecil had been continuing for weeks, and both of them seized eagerly upon this suggestion for a personal meeting between their mistresses. The chief hope that the Scottish Council and Lethington placed in such a meeting was that Elizabeth might be successful, where all other influences had failed, in persuading their Queen to abandon Catholicism, and adopt, if not Calvinism, at least the less extreme form of the Reformed.

religion, as practised in England. It is a nice speculative question as to whether the realistic Elizabeth would have been successful in overcoming the scruples of the idealistic Mary. It remains, however, a question without an answer, since it was fated that Mary should never hear her cousin discourse on the attractions of the Protestant faith, or on any other subject. At the time, however, Elizabeth expressed her willingness that such a meeting should be arranged, and seems to have been sincere in her intention.

Preparations went forward at Holyrood and Westminster, in Scottish and English council chambers. Vast sums were spent upon rich velvets and fine-spun silks by both the Queens, and sempresses were no less busy and anxious to do their best for their royal mistresses than were the statesmen and their secretaries. The Scottish Queen was gay and eager at the near prospect of seeing at last this strange cousin who had used her so hardly and who now wished her so well. Arrangements were perfected; everything should be ready in time; no expense of gold or energy was spared to make the representation of Scotland worthy. The meeting-place might be York, or Sheffield, perhaps Nottingham. That mattered not. Such preparations for the journey were made as should meet any emergency. Gowns were tried on in Holyrood Palace, approved, rejected, altered; while time seemed to stand still for the Queen of Scots, supremely confident in her womanly way that she would match, in wit, beauty, and glory of setting, her Majesty of England.

Meanwhile, unknown to either Queen, Mary's uncle, the Duke of Guise, had inaugurated an intolerant policy towards the Huguenots. His policy took effect in persecution, and other action which made it undesirable, if not impossible, for Elizabeth to leave the southern part of her kingdom. The meeting was, therefore, declared off.

Mary heard this news with grief and tears; and her cousin's assurance that the meeting was only postponed until the next year, gave only partial assuagement. She

sent Elizabeth a message of gratification for her continued amity, accepted her reasons for the cancellation of the meeting, and diverted herself from the disappointment by setting out upon her first Northern Progress to Aberdeen and Inverness—that progress which brought ruin to the powerful Gordons, death to their chief, and execution to his heir.

The proposal for the postponed interview was debated by the Scots Council, and they again consented to the meeting of the Queens. It is illuminating, in view of Elizabeth's future treatment of Mary, to note that the Council renewed a caution that they had given their Queen in connection with the originally-planned meeting, in these terms : “that they would no wise give her counsel to commit her body in England, and therefore referred the place of the meeting and the security of her own person to herself.” Which hint makes it clear that, in their rebel negotiations with the English Queen, they had discovered material on which to found a truer estimate of her than Mary was ever to hold.

In the event, this caution proved as unnecessary as the silks and velvets. The years went by, and at each new proposal for a meeting, Elizabeth pretended eagerness for it, yet always invented some pretext to prevent it from happening. The meeting never took place ; the Treaty of Edinburgh was never ratified ; Mary's right to the succession to the English throne was never declared, and her loyalty to Catholicism remained unshaken.

§2

Faithful as she was to her duties as a sovereign—in hearkening to the rough admonitions of Knox, handling the jealous and dexterous Elizabeth, subduing rebels and guarding the interests of the poor and oppressed—Mary did not abandon the gay and enjoying attitude to life that was hers by training and temperament. The French Court had its weaknesses, but it had, by example, taught her the art of graceful, recreative living. The brightness of her Court moved Knox to report in his dour

fashion : " There might be seen skipping not very comely for honest women. Her common talk was in secret, she saw nothing in Scotland but gravity, which repugned altogether to her nature, for she was brought up in joyosity ; so termed she her dancing, and other things thereto pertaining."

The regimen that the Reformer was endeavouring to impose upon Scotland could suffer a generous leavening of honest pleasure, without danger of being made heretically gay. Had she cared to adopt Knox's method of proving all things by Old Testament analogies, Mary could have made out an incontrovertible case for her way of conducting her Court, by instancing the Courts of David and Solomon, and other Hebrew kings, who saw that a measure of social civilisation was no bad thing for a people emerging from a semi-savage state. The rarified joy of spiritual content was as well known to the Queen as to any of her subjects, but she had the common sense to preserve a balance. Bodily and mental exercise and happiness were as necessary to human beings as spiritual ecstasies. Mary's God was more inclined to approve the relaxation of hunting, dancing, masking and enjoying the good fruits of the earth, than to punish them as Knox averred He did, by sending famine, silver frosts, and tidelessness to seas, to warn the people how wicked their Queen was. To be just to the Reformer, it has to be admitted that, in his view, dancing and joyosity were merely a prelude and a pretext for lasciviousness. At one point in the writing of his *History*, he seems to have desired to make quite clear what he believed was the true inwardness of the gaiety of the young Queen's Court, so he bethought himself of a certain scandalous Masque of Orleans, held by the Cardinal of Lorraine ; and he penned this masterpiece of innuendo : " We call her not a whore (albeit her dame heard more than we will write) but she (Mary) was brought up in the company of the wildest whoremongers (yea, of such as no more regarded incest, than honest men regard the company of their lawful wives). . . . What she was and is, herself best knows, and God (we doubt not) will further declare."

Acknowledged master of dialectics as he was, Knox knew how much more effective innuendo can be than honest statement of facts ; and he never hesitated to state facts against his Queen when they were available to him. The reference to incest betrays him as having gossiped with his friend Bothwell ; he was thus enabled to give perpetuity to the dubious allegation of that immaculate liver.

The Reformer's blethering with tongue and pen against her way of life did not bring Mary to consciousness of the need of penitence or reform. She continued to season the gravity that she found afflicting Scotland with some of her own gaiety, and took her sports and pleasures to the extent she felt to be good. She even had profanely musical evenings, and, when needing a bass singer to complete her private choir, she engaged an Italian, David Riccio, to fill the part. To his and her cost, he proved to have an even better brain than larynx, and, as will be told, was murdered because of his mistress's favour. A realisation of the gaiety and gallantry of the Queen's temperament and attitude is essential to a right appreciation of her history. The superb physical and spiritual vitality of which they were an expression enabled her to live through as tragic a career as ever monarch suffered, and to die in a manner that gave posterity the true answer to the riddle of her times.

It may well have been that Mary's recreations had a suspicious intensity, for, long before the central tragedy of her life was enacted, she was shiveringly conscious of the tragic quality of her destiny. This consciousness was not only awakened by intuitive premonition, for the main facts of her life before she reached Scotland were bleak enough to have dismayed the highest-hearted. Her father had died when she was seven days old ; she had been separated from her mother, except for one brief visit, since she was five years old, and her mother had died tragically after struggling for years to retain the Scottish throne for her. Before she had reached her teens an attempt had been made to poison her. She had been widowed three days before her nineteenth birthday ; and

had immediately become the object of intensified fear and hatred by Elizabeth, Catherine of Medici, John Knox, and her half-brother. There is little cause to wonder that she should have expressed herself to Throckmorton as almost hoping that Elizabeth's effort to capture her on her voyage would succeed, and that it might be better to be killed than to reach Scotland.

And John Knox, Christ's minister, knowing all these things, howled at her for dancing, on occasion, till past midnight.

§3

The negotiations for a meeting with Elizabeth having reached a futile ending, and Fate having forced her hand to destroy her most powerful Catholic subject, Mary's evil fortune continued its activity by denying her, in a manner defying the understanding of human wit, a second husband who was worthy of her either as woman or Queen.

She was the most desirable match, for any king or prince, in Europe. Among definite suitors for her hand at one time or another were Don Carlos, heir to Philip of Spain ; the King of Sweden, and his brother ; the King of Denmark ; the King of Navarre ; the Duke of Ferrara ; the Prince of Condé ; the Duke of Orleans, afterwards King of France ; the young Duke of Guise ; the Cardinal of Bourbon ; Don John of Austria ; the Duke of Norfolk ; and Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester. Some of these Mary rejected out of hand as unworthy for various reasons ; the negotiations with others were frustrated by the obstructionist machinations of Elizabeth, the Cardinal of Guise, Catherine of Medici—and Fate. It was Fate, or whatever the power be named that governs super-human agencies and circumstances, it was this power that shattered the best and most hopeful match of them all—that with Don Carlos of Spain : Fate and Elizabeth.

Lethington, who had read aright the trend of Elizabeth's policy indicated by her vacillation about the meeting with his Queen, applied his superb diplomatic aptitude



HENRY LORD DARNLEY

to the task of bringing about a matrimonial alliance with Spain, as being the best alternative to the Anglo-Scottish alliance that now seemed improbable, except at the cost of too heavy concessions by Mary. The Earl of Moray, precise Protestant though he was, supported the Spanish marriage; for, if Mary married Philip's weakly son, she would reside in Spain, and who but himself should rule Scotland as Regent in the Queen's absence? Lethington had been censured by the Preachers for not being "a keen persecutor," and his career suggests that he was a simple believer in God, lacking the narrowness or the intensity of vision necessary for adherence to any particular creed. He must have decided that the complete amity with England, which had hitherto been his sole aim, was impossible so long as Mary remained a Catholic; and that, therefore, for the sake of Scotland, the strongest possible Catholic alliance by marriage was the only safe alternative to safeguard the country from English dominance. The negotiations with Spain proceeded promisingly, through De Quadra, the Spanish ambassador in London, and seemed to be on the very point of success when De Quadra died. The interruption caused by this event resulted, owing to the delicate and secret nature of the negotiations, in a fatal delay which culminated in the breaking off of negotiations. They dragged on for a year after the ambassador's death, but by that time Philip's enthusiasm had cooled, and he instructed his new ambassador to inform Lethington that the negotiations must be considered as ended.

It is not purposed to deal fully with the other fruitless negotiations for Mary's marriage that were conducted simultaneously with, and subsequently to, those for the Spanish match. Elizabeth had commanded Lethington to tell Mary that she could not avoid being her enemy if she married Don Carlos, or any member of the house of Austria. Her uneasiness as to an Austrian marriage arose from the fact that the Cardinal of Lorraine, without consulting Mary, had practically concluded arrangements for her marriage to the Archduke, who, however, was rejected as neither rich nor powerful enough to be her

consort. Elizabeth also declared that she could avoid being Mary's enemy if she would take a Protestant husband, but there was no royal suitor of that religion who satisfied her.

During the progress of the Spanish negotiations Mary suffered another bereavement when her uncle, the Duke of Guise, was assassinated by a Huguenot. The puzzling Elizabeth wrote her condolences in so friendly and tender a strain, that Mary was moved to tears of appreciation. "God will not leave me destitute," she cried after reading the letter, which thus had its calculated effect of lessening Mary's suspicion of the English Queen's real intentions towards her. Apart from the personal loss, her uncle's decease removed her most ardent champion for the recovery of the English throne. It was this blow, combined with her belief in the sincerity of the sentiments expressed in Elizabeth's letter, that moved Mary to tolerate in so friendly a humour Elizabeth's intervention in her matrimonial projects.

The English Queen's determination was to force or inveigle her cousin into an inferior marriage, so that she should gain no accession of power that would enable her to make a bid for the English throne. She proposed that Mary should marry some noble out of England or Scotland, declaring that if the Queen of Scots married such a subject of either of them, whom she approved, she would then settle the succession question to Mary's satisfaction. Hesitatingly, probably insincerely, but certainly with consummate effrontery, Elizabeth suggested a choice in the person of her own lover, Robert Dudley, whom she raised to the rank of Earl of Leicester in order to enhance his dubious desirability.

It had become the Scottish habit, for practical reasons, always to humour the Virgin Queen; and so, on various occasions, Lethington and Andrew Melville travelled to London to discuss this baffling proposal with her. Those who are interested to discover the extent of Elizabeth's jealous curiosity regarding her cousin's appearance and accomplishments will find it divertingly described in Melville's *Memoirs*. He also tells us how, when investing

Dudley as Earl of Leicester, Elizabeth could not resist kittling and tickling him familiarly before the assembly ; and also how Leicester asked him, in effect, to tender to Queen Mary his apologies for having seemed to have “so proud a pretence as to marry so great a Queen.” Leicester bade him tell Mary that the proposal was a child of Cecil, his worst enemy, and to make it clear that he disliked the idea of the match. Elizabeth expressed to Melville the most extravagant love of her dear sister, his Queen, but, on being asked by Mary, on his return, his judgment of the sincerity of these professions of goodwill, he said, “there was neither plain dealing nor upright meaning, but great dissimulation, emulation, and fear that her (Mary’s) princely qualities should over soon chase her out and displace her from her kingdom.”

Elizabeth’s only concern in interesting herself in her cousin’s marriage plans was to prevent her making a foreign match, by which she would gain the force necessary for any attempt to chase her out of her kingdom. Her own uncertainty as to whether she wished to give her lover to Mary, and Mary’s uncertainty as to whether she wanted to have him at any price, caused Elizabeth to fix another string to her Cupid’s bow, but without any intention that the arrow from it should hit the bull of Mary’s acceptance. This was Henry Darnley, son of the Earl of Lennox, who had been exiled from Scotland for some years, and of Margaret Douglas, whose descent made her son next in succession after Mary to Elizabeth’s throne, and also a close claimant to the throne of Scotland.

These Lennoxes had been harshly used by Elizabeth since the spring of 1562, and were now suddenly restored to favour. The Countess of Lennox had begun, almost as soon as Mary was widowed, to intrigue for a marriage between her and Darnley, which was the probable cause of Elizabeth’s harshness. The Queen was now, however, determined to dangle Darnley before Mary as a suitable husband, and in June 1563 asked Mary to restore Lennox his Scottish estates, and to allow him to return to Scotland. Mary immediately granted both requests ; but her agreement had hardly been intimated when Elizabeth

begged that it should be revoked, on the pretext that some of her friends in Scotland disliked the notion of Lennox's return. Obviously Elizabeth had begun to regret her alternative ; but Mary, backed by Lethington's advice, flatly declined to offend Lennox by withdrawing her consent, and he was allowed to enter Scotland, where she received him well. After months of diplomatic sword-play, Elizabeth decided to let matters take their course, confident that she could arrest them before they reached a dangerous stage, and allowed Darnley to join his father in Scotland. The Scottish Council and the Queen interpreted this move as a sign that Elizabeth favoured a match between Mary and the handsome young Darnley, an assumption that was supported by the doubt that was felt as to Elizabeth's sincerity in offering Leicester.

Mary took an instant liking for Darnley, who was a Catholic, and Moray and Knox were perturbed at the swift development of the romance, which threatened the, to them, desirable match with the Protestant lover of the English Queen. The Spanish marriage negotiations had by this time been finally broken off, and Mary was becoming weary of her cousin's vacillation in the matter of Leicester ; but her sudden decision to marry Darnley was not due to this cause. Mary dropped the idea of marrying Leicester, or perhaps it would be truer to say that she broke off the negotiations which she knew would never reach a happy issue, in a spontaneous mood of angry disgust. An incident was reported to her, which stung her high pride and removed any doubt she may have still nurtured concerning the relationship subsisting between Elizabeth and Leicester. The favourite had been playing a fast game of tennis, and at the end of a sett had approached Elizabeth and, taking her handkerchief from her person, had wiped the perspiration from his face. In face of the protest of a courtier, Elizabeth had laughingly approved Leicester's familiarity. It was just a drop of the small beer of gossip, but on such apparent insignificancies does the turn of destiny often depend. Mary, on hearing of it, fell into a passion of anger, and dismissed all consideration of Leicester from her mind. With

Lethington's approval she made her decision to marry Darnley.

Elizabeth's outburst when she heard this news proved that she had been completely outwitted. It became manifest that her sending Darnley to Scotland had been intended as nothing more than another device to woo Mary from seeking a foreign marriage. Wrapped up in her own view of the circumstances, she had seemingly never dreamt that Mary might convert her pretext into a reality, though she must have known that the marriage would strengthen Mary's right to the English throne. Her method of opposition revealed a lack of understanding of Mary's character almost as obtuse as Mary's misconception of hers. She called her Council together, and, on May 1st, 1564, declared the Darnley marriage to be “unmeet, unprofitable, and perilous to the sincere amity between the Queens and their realms”; and generously offered to give Mary the choice of any other noble she liked to name, while reserving the right to veto whoever might be chosen. Throckmorton conveyed this decision of the Council to Scotland, carrying also a postscript of Elizabeth's own views and threats. She bade her envoy tell Mary plainly that if she married Darnley, she would lose her goodwill, but that if she would marry Leicester, she would have her goodwill, and, further, that she would “inquire, judge, or publish” her title to the English succession. She was now thoroughly alarmed, and was willing to sacrifice Leicester rather than have Mary marry one who would still further jeopardise the safety of her crown.

Lethington, who had gone to London, to obtain the consent of Spain and France to the Darnley marriage, returned with Throckmorton to Scotland, and succeeded in intercepting a defiant letter from his Queen to Elizabeth. He persuaded her to withdraw it, convincing her that the best course to pursue was one of friendly surprise at Elizabeth's opposition. The English Queen proved implacable. She sent peremptory orders to Lennox and Darnley to return to England, and put Lady Lennox into the Tower; also dismissing Mary's Protestant

envoy, John Hay, in an outburst of unreasoning rage.

§4

The animosity of the relentless triumvirate was now united by a common cause—hatred and fear of the Darnley marriage. All three had been able to adjust their consciences to approve the proposal for Mary's marriage with the English Queen's lover, because, forsooth, he was a Protestant, even if of inferior lineage, because such a union would have served all their interests. Their common objection to Darnley was that he was a Catholic, though Elizabeth objected to him, personally, on the ground of his near right to the English throne. Knox encouraged Moray to foment an armed rebellion against his Queen; Elizabeth promised to help him to do so; and Moray took the counsel and the promise, which were after his own heart. He fondly believed that, with Elizabeth's promise, the Lords of the Congregation had now got Mary into just such a position as that in which they had had her mother, after Lethington had brought over to them his matchless gifts. This time, however, Lethington was not with him.

A foreign marriage with a sufficiently powerful prince having proved impossible, Mary, in marrying Darnley, made the best choice that was left to her. Perhaps one should rather say that, in selecting the political personage who was next in succession after herself to the English throne, as distinct from Darnley, the man, her choice was entirely sound. He strengthened, by addition, Mary's right to the English succession; as a Catholic, he increased the hopes of the English Catholics; he was approved by the two great Catholic powers, Spain and France. His great drawback was in being himself—a proud, sulky, weak, selfish youth, lacking to a singular degree the qualities of character and temperament needful for upholding the high destiny and the titanic task implicit in his acceptance of the Queen. Had his quality as a human being approximated to that of his rank, there need have been no tragedy of Mary Stewart to beguile

controversialists. He was to prove the perfect instrument for forwarding the schemes of the triumvirate. In face of the facts, Elizabeth's stormy opposition to the marriage wears an almost comic aspect: it served her turn so well.

CHAPTER FOUR

"THE BRAW GALLANT"

§ I

THE bonny Earl of Moray, who had become reconciled to Knox after an estrangement of eighteen months resulting from the Reformer's unseemly vehemence against the Queen at the time of the Spanish marriage negotiations, had always been what was called a precise Protestant. He may have been a sincere Protestant, even though he continued to draw the revenues of two Catholic priories, which had been a gift to him when he was a Catholic child. He was long-sighted enough to have seen, all along, that it was to the Reformed party that he must adhere for the success of his ambition to oust his sister from power. The Darnley marriage provided him with his first promising opportunity to make his bid for supremacy.

The Queen asked him to sign a document assenting to the marriage. He declined to do so, pleading that "he would be loth to consent to the marriage of any such one of whom there was so little hope that he would be a forwarder or setter forth of Christ's true religion, which was the thing most to be desired, and in him (Darnley) so few tokens that any good would be done, who hitherto had showed himself rather an enemy than a professor of the same." This was broadly the attitude of all enthusiastic Protestants towards Darnley, and, being their political leader, it was natural and right that he should express this view. Obviously, however, his proper course of action should have been to raise a rebellion to prevent the marriage. There would have been as earnest support from his co-religionists, and from Elizabeth, as

there was to be after the marriage had happened. It was the clear course for any disinterested Protestant leader who desired only to prevent Scotland being afflicted by a Catholic King as well as Queen. To have prevented the marriage, however, would not have forwarded Moray's ambition, as a successful rebellion to that end would have simply resulted in the *status quo ante*.

Mary had, at last, begun to suspect his loyalty, and had told him plainly, a few days before asking him to sign the document of assent, that it seemed clear to her that “he wished to set the crown on his own head”; in saying which she revealed, not for the first time, her perspicacity. His acts show that this was his precise intention. A rebellion would have made Scotland safe for Protestantism, would have forbidden the marriage with Darnley, and have left Mary still on the throne, more or less under the compulsion, by the will of her subjects, to marry a Protestant. The achievement of these three objects would have satisfied all but the most extreme Protestants, but they would not have satisfied Moray, to whom the comfort of the Protestants was secondary to the seizing of power. Therefore, he opposed the marriage with nothing more puissant than words, and bided his time.

His plan was sound and promising, and it was only defeated by the treachery of his ally, Elizabeth, and, in part, by the loyalty of the common people to their Queen. He determined, as soon as the marriage was an accomplished fact, to stir up a rebellion in the name of religion, accept the promised help of Elizabeth, and capture the Queen and Darnley. This done, Darnley and his father, Lennox, should be handed over to the tender mercies of the English Queen; and Mary should be either deposed or so reduced in power that Moray should have the government of the realm in his hands. Had such a rebellion, undertaken in the name of religion, been successful, it is credible that Moray, backed by Knox, would have been able to depose the Queen, or hand her over to Elizabeth to be tried on some trumped-up charge. The lengths to which Moray was prepared to go become clear later, and

justify this otherwise extravagant assumption. No one, so far as the present writer has been able to discover, has emphasised the significance of Moray's deferring his armed opposition to the marriage until after it had been solemnised. The delay served the ends of all the members of the triumvirate.

Moray and his confederates gave no indication of their purpose of overt opposition until a month before the wedding. Information as to the direction which their schemes were likely to take did, however, reach Mary. She learnt news of a plot, by which Moray, Argyll, and others purposed to kill Lennox and Darnley, or hand them over to Elizabeth ; and to capture and imprison herself. It remains an open question whether this conspiracy ever got beyond the stage of consideration of ways and means ; but there cannot be any doubt that such a plot was seriously contemplated. Randolph, the English ambassador, wrote to Cecil, within a day or two of the date on which it is supposed the attempt was to have been made : " Some that already have heard of my Lady's Grace (Lady Lennox) imprisonment, like very well thereof, and wish both father and son to keep her company. The question hath been asked me, Whether, if they were delivered unto us into Berwick, we would receive them ? I answered, That we could or would not refuse our own, in what sort soever they come unto us." The success of such a plot would have pleased Elizabeth, who had formally recalled Lennox and Darnley, and would have guaranteed to the rebels her enthusiastic support in any action they might have taken against the imprisoned Queen. Probably the intention was to have offered her the alternatives of deposition of the renunciation of her religion. Moray, knowing his sister, could have been in no doubt of the outcome : that Mary would have chosen deposition rather than apostacy. There is convincing circumstantial evidence that the plot was only frustrated by Mary's courage and resource, when she eluded capture during a ride from Perth to Callendar, on her way to attend the Protestant baptismal service of a child of Lord Livingston.

This discovery, and other signs, such as certain disloyal articles submitted by the General Assembly, the convening of the Protestant Lords at Stirling, and Moray's refusal to obey her peremptory command to appear before her, persuaded Mary that the time had come to assert her power. She also learnt that “ a great number of her lieges ” had armed themselves, under the impression that it was now her intention “ to impede, stay, or molest ” them in the practice of their religion. She issued a Proclamation, charging all her subjects to appear in Edinburgh, and to remain there for fifteen days. In answer to this summons six or seven thousand of her followers assembled in the capital within ten days ; and the Lords of the Congregation had scuttled to their castles. Moray, Argyll, and others, had already appealed to the bounty of Elizabeth—addressing her as “ Protectrix most special of the professors of the religion ”—and by the end of July, the Protectrix sent John Thomworth to urge Mary not to call Moray before those “ whom he had cause to judge his mortal enemies.” Before Thomworth had been received, Moray, having again declined to answer a second peremptory summons from his Queen, was, on August 6th, denounced as an outlaw.

Mary had married Darnley on the 29th of July, and was now free to give her full attention to subduing the recalcitrant Lords. The day after outlawing Moray, she received Elizabeth's messenger, and bade him tell his mistress not “ to meddle to compound the controversies ” between her and her rebel subjects. She, on her side, promised to do nothing to disturb the peace of the English realm, but Elizabeth must not practise with or harbour disaffected Scots.

The high mood in which she answered Elizabeth, she sustained valiantly until she had crushed the rebellion and driven Moray and seventy of his accomplices into England. Rothes, Kirkcaldy of Grange, and the Provost of Dundee, refusing to ward themselves at her command, were outlawed. Lord Gordon, who had been warded in Dunbar Castle since the overthrow of his clan, was

released and restored to favour and his lands. Bothwell was recalled from exile, into which he had been forced by Moray's animosity. The people were reassured on the question of religion by the reissue of the Proclamation which Mary had published, on her arrival, four years before. Other Proclamations called out the inhabitants of the Lothians, the central and southern counties, to meet the King and Queen at Edinburgh, Glasgow, Falkirk, Stirling, Almond Water, Kirkintilloch, and at Irvine, during the last week in August.

The Queen left Edinburgh to head her forces on the last Sunday of that month, relentlessly determined to revenge herself on the treacherous Moray. At the end of the week, Châtelhérault, the insane Arran's father, Moray and his confederates, rode into Edinburgh with twelve hundred horse, hoping to beat up recruits. Meeting with little response to threats and bribes, and learning that the Queen was advancing to engage them, they left the town in the small hours of Sunday morning, a week after Mary's departure. They retired swiftly, as she forced them to, for only delay caused by foul weather had prevented her from intercepting and routing them as they fled.

Argyll, with his forces, having failed to join the rebel army by the time it had reached Dumfries, Moray decided to remain in that town; meanwhile begging Elizabeth to substantiate materially her promise of help. He sent Robert Melville to her Court to impress upon her the urgency of their requirements—munitions, money, and men, all were lacking. If only their strength were increased, Melville was to tell her, Lethington and Morton would come over to the rebel side. But Elizabeth flatly refused to send them any help. They must make the best terms for themselves that they could; but she would give them sanctuary in England if the extremity of their straits made that necessary. Moray and his followers swallowed this bitter, if empty, pill, and issued their Proclamation in which they sought to justify their rebellion, by denying that they had been guilty of sedition, rebellion, or treason, having done or intended nothing

other than became “the faithful of God and the true subjects to do to their Prince, native country, and commonweal of the same.”

The Queen exerted herself heroically, calling up and assembling her lieges, and doing more than all her councillors to ensure success. She provided that the heirs of those who might be slain in her service should be compensated; and countered the rebels’ explanatory declaration of their innocence of the crimes that they were committing, by herself issuing a Proclamation boldly asserting that the religious pretext of the Lords was a mere pretence, and that their real object was “to take to themselves the whole use and administration of the Kingdom.” She again emphasised her own religious policy by proclaiming that she wished to hold a Parliament to give perfect security to the professors of the religion which she found universally standing when she had returned to Scotland. She raised the money necessary for the payment of her troops, from the towns of Perth, Dundee, and St. Andrews, pledged her personal jewels, and compelled Edinburgh to make her a loan. Lord Gordon, now Earl of Huntly, was made Lieutenant of the Western Counties; Atholl, of the North; and the Earl of Bothwell, who had returned, was appointed Lieutenant-General of the Marches.

In coat of mail, with knapscull on her lovely head, the Queen, fully armed, set out from Edinburgh again, at the head of her forces, on October 8th. Her army was somewhere between six thousand and twelve thousand men, far outnumbering the rebel troops, who were still lying at Dumfries. The loyal forces encountered no opposition, but when they reached Dumfries they found it empty. The bonny Earl and the Confederate Lords had decided that the sanctuary in England was the better part of valour, and, even as the Queen set out from Edinburgh, they had bolted to Carlisle, whence they made their way to Newcastle. The Queen left Bothwell with a small force at Dumfries, and returned to Edinburgh, reaching the capital ten days after she had set out. Moray, against the advice of the Earl of Bedford, insisted upon travelling

to London to interview Elizabeth, and beg again for the help he needed and had expected. All he got for his trouble was a humiliating lecture in the presence of the Privy Council and two foreign ambassadors, in which he was upbraided for his rebellion, and, during which, he must have wondered whether Elizabeth intended to keep him as a prisoner instead of harbouring him as a guest. He had now learnt that Elizabeth only backed the winning side.

For the moment, there was little more for Mary to do. She accepted the feeble Châtelhérault's submission on condition that he went into exile for five years ; and issued a formal summons to Moray, Argyll, Rothes, and the other rebel Lords "to compear in the Parliament," on the 12th day of March, "to hear and see the doom of forfeiture orderly led against them."

Mary was triumphant. Moray was politically outwitted, and his rebellion crushed. For once, Fortune had smiled on the tragic young Queen, and the future seemed bright with hope. After such a lesson as they had had, the Protestant political faction were unlikely to resort to arms again, and, therefore, the danger of Moray robbing her of her crown had become remote, as, a few weeks ago, it had seemed almost imminent. She must have thrilled with a personal sense of power, for the whole of the success of the recent enterprise was admittedly due to her. If, and when, she pardoned the exiled Lords, they should return only as obedient subjects, not as challengers of her authority and rule.

§2

The exaltation which the Queen must have experienced after the triumphant issue of her acceptance of the first armed challenge to her power and right, was modified by a consciousness of the difficulties that faced her. The majority of the leading nobles were in exile in England, free to plot to the top of their bent ; the promises that she had made in regard to establishing security of religious worship had to be honoured ; Darnley was already convicted, by his attitude and actions, of incapacity for

kingship, and the councillors upon whom she had relied in the past were no longer dependable, or not available. The Earl of Moray was an outlaw, and Lethington had returned to his insistence upon a policy that should win and maintain Elizabeth's full friendship. The quality and dependability of that friendship was then being demonstrated by the English Queen harbouring Mary's rebels.

At last Mary seems to have realised—even if only temporarily—that Elizabeth's amity was selfishly calculated, and that a compromise with her Protestant nobility on the subject of religion was impracticable. Her need was to free herself from the necessity of continually placating Elizabeth; and so to strengthen her personal power that the Protestant nobility would never again dare to challenge her authority. She had to provide against another attempt by Moray to depose her under the pretext of religion.

She had already sent Francis Yaxley to plead with the King of Spain for help; and the Bishop of Dunblane to the Pope for the same purpose, while the issue of the rebellion was still undecided. Their response had been satisfactory. Philip gave Yaxley twenty thousand crowns as an assurance of his goodwill and desire to help; and the Pope sent the Queen a like sum, and a promise to provide, in addition, four thousand crowns a month for soldiers' wages. Characteristic misfortune attended Mary even in this. Yaxley was wrecked and drowned on the English coast on his homeward journey, the money falling into the hands of the Duke of Northumberland. Mary demanded the money from the Duke, who referred to Elizabeth the settlement of the question as to whether it was not his just wrack. His Queen bade him inform Mary that he had no crowns or ducats save what were found upon the corpse of Yaxley, an Englishman.

Mary now determined upon a bold and venturesome policy: to restore Catholicism as the State religion of Scotland, and to make a bid for the English throne.

A superficial view is that, in determining to restore

the old religion, the Queen was guilty of plain duplicity, in regard to the promise that she had made to her subjects during the rebellion—that her religious policy was unchanged since her arrival in the realm. The reissued Proclamation, which was identical with the one that had been put out the day after her first Mass had been disturbed by brawlers, charged her lieges “that none of them take upon hand, privately or openly, to make any alteration or innovation of the state of religion, or attempt anything against the form, which her Majesty found public and universally standing at her Majesty’s arrival in this her realm, under the pain of death.”

An impartial examination of the precise words used to define the religion, and keeping in view the fact that this Proclamation was drafted by the Protestant Privy Council, and not by Mary, personally, would seem to make it clear that the Council themselves were doubtful whether the Reformed Kirk was universal in Scotland. Had they dared, they would undoubtedly have used phrasing much more explicit and definite than “which her Majesty found public and universally standing” to describe their intention, especially as the Proclamation was intended to protect the Queen and her people in the practice of the Catholic religion.

The Acts of Parliament which deposed the Catholic religion and established the Reformed Kirk, were not legal when Mary arrived, because they had been sealed by a forged royal signet; and Mary was never asked to give them the royal assent. Those acts were, in a strict legal sense, of no more effect than was the Treaty of Edinburgh. This the Privy Council and the Queen had both known, and, because of the hesitation on both sides to raise so dangerous a question so soon after the Queen’s arrival, the ambiguous phraseology was approved without protest. It is, in this regard, significant that the Lords of the Congregation made no attempt to enforce those anti-Catholic Acts with the full rigour that had been intended before Mary’s return. There were fanatical outbreaks by angry zealots, and nothing more.

The Proclamation that the Queen issued at Dundee



THE MURDER OF RICCIO
From a painting by E. M. Ward

during the course of Moray's rebellion stated her intention "to abolish and put away all acts, laws and constitutions, canon, civil, or municipal, prejudicial to the Reformed religion in Scotland." If this undertaking was, as it must have been intended to be, reassuring to the rank and file of the Reformed party, it would seem obvious that, in strict law, they and not the Catholics, were subject to oppression. Otherwise the assurance was a simple piece of irony, a device the Queen was unlikely to use when fighting for the security of her crown.

The Proclamation was directly in line with Mary's policy of religious toleration. There is positive evidence that, when she was actively contemplating the restoration of Catholicism, she did not resile from this fundamental standpoint. In a letter that she wrote to Pope Pius IV, expressing her intention of restoring Catholicism when she could, she gave him a clear hint that she would have no persecution to attain her end. "She could not," she wrote, "stain her hands with the blood of her subjects." This statement does not, perhaps, preclude the possibility of forms of oppression less severe than death, but it does foreshadow a more kindly and Christian spirit in action than that which John Knox expressed when helping the Lords to draft the laws against Catholics. The worst that would have happened, had Mary been successful in giving effect to her policy of restoring Catholicism, would have been to enable Knox's infidels ("for all Papists are infidels") to worship God according to their consciences without fear of mortal penalties; and that the Church lands and property would have been restored to their rightful owners. The Earl of Moray, for instance, would hardly have been able to be at once the Protestant lay leader and the recipient of revenues from two priories.

Mary's religious policy, embracing the proposed restoration of Catholicism, did no damage to her reputation either as an honourable woman or as a patriotic sovereign. The policy was defeated by misfortune, manifesting through the treachery and jealousy of the

man whom she had chosen for consort, wrought upon by her rebels and their friends. There was no one among her subjects whom she could employ to assist her in her ambitious designs. The Earl of Huntly, recently restored, might have been willing, but he was not competent. Bothwell was a Protestant, and, therefore, would not be likely to help her in a pro-Catholic policy. Lethington, with his English complex, would be antagonistic to a plan which embodied a bid for the English throne; and also because he was committed to the Reformed party. As her mother, in a somewhat similar predicament, had had to fall back upon French advisers, so Mary had recourse to a foreigner.

David Riccio had come to the country in the entourage of Morette, the ambassador from Savoy, a few months after the Queen arrived in Scotland. He had been simply a low-born Piedmontese, possessing a good bass voice, a gift that had caused the Queen to detach him from the ambassador, and employ him as both chorister and valet. These positions he had filled satisfactorily, and had succeeded in winning his mistress's regard. When her French secretary, Raulet, had got himself dismissed for his undue familiarity with the English ambassador, Riccio was appointed in his place. The Italian proved himself an adventurous opportunist, and, despite the hostility of the nobles, he rapidly became a power in the Court. He supported the Darnley marriage with all the unprincipled zeal of a servant who had made his interests coincide with his mistress's desires. He won, and for a time held, Darnley's friendship, thus increasing the hatred which the Protestant Lords already bore him. Sincere as he seems to have been in his devotion to the Queen, he had the readiness of the low-born to accept bribes from those who wished to use his influence to advance their affairs with the Queen. Mary herself rewarded him liberally for his services, especially in the months following the rebellion, when she was more or less forced to rely upon him for help and advice. The fact that the Earl of Moray was one of his bitterest enemies is a token that he was loyal to Mary, and working to increase her power

and strengthen her interests. Moray and his faction suspected Riccio of being an emissary of the Pope ; and it may have been that he suggested the post-rebellion policy to Mary, and thus increased her gratitude to him for providing her with a positive egress from her dilemma. However that may be, it is certain that the Queen's secret correspondence was in his hands, during the time that Lethington was deprived of his sovereign's confidence. The temporary eclipse of the Queen's Secretary at this time, while still retaining his official position, is reasonably explained by the fact that he was a Protestant, and still faithful to his pro-English policy. Considering his valiant efforts to bring about the Spanish marriage, it may well have been that the Queen was at fault in refraining from an attempt to win him over to her new policy. Lethington's Protestantism was political, and had she been able to convince him that her new policy was patriotically sound, he would have been unlikely to boggle at supporting a Catholic restoration on tolerant lines. It is true that the Queen had rewarded him with the gift of the Abbey of Haddington, but self-interest in a material sense was not a noticeable failing of Lethington.

The Queen, however, did not take this course. Indifferent to the enmity and jealousy that she was arousing by openly depending so exclusively upon the detested Italian upstart, she worked upon her ambitious schemes. Her personal conduct towards him was on a dangerously intimate basis. He was given a freedom of access to her that aroused comment and suspicion. She played cards with him in her private apartments until the small hours of the morning ; entertained him as a guest at her most personal gatherings ; treated him, candidly, as a royal favourite. Whether it was the grace of his person, the charm of his manner, or the brilliance of his intellect that won him so signal a measure of the Queen's favour must remain in doubt. It is credible that Mary's obsession for him was due to her finding in him a present and dependable help in time of trouble.

During the period of Riccio's ascendancy at Court, Darnley, the man whose incompetence and lack of

character were the causes of it, was rapidly alienating himself from the Queen's good opinion. She had treated him before, and immediately after, their marriage with a kindness of heart and a generosity of spirit, the sincerity of which has never been questioned. She gave him, in practice, the status of King, insisting upon his signature preceding hers on all State documents; and, in short, provided him with every opportunity and encouragement to relieve her of a share of the privileges and the cares of State. But, with a caution and concern for the interests of her realm, for which she has received little credit, the Queen was slow to confirm by irrevocable acts the powers that she was giving him by courtesy. It was as if she insisted that he should first prove his worthiness. His response was to act in a proud, disdainful manner towards her friends, and to neglect to show any real interest in the public affairs which were absorbing her. If any credence is to be given to gossip and reports current at the time, he was early unfaithful to her body, and it is certain that he was drinking more than was beneficial for one holding the responsible rank that was his. He became envious of the trust reposed in Riccio, and probably credited the Italian with responsibility for the Queen's withholding from him the crown-matrimonial.

It is significant that while, on Darnley's own asseverations, Mary had fulfilled her duties as wife, at bed and board, faithfully and to his great pleasure during the early months of marriage, she had, because of his insufferable vanity, ceased to find pleasure in his companionship. According to his allegations, Riccio was now enjoying the rights and privileges that had been his. Allowance has to be made for Darnley's youth—he was only twenty. The heir of parents who had held an equivocal position in the English Queen's Court, he had, in five months, been exalted to the rank of King-consort. It was inevitable that such a sudden vaulting over his peers and superiors should have been unsettling. In Darnley it created an avidity of appetite for place and power, not uncommon to characters devoid of gratitude and humility. The honours that had already been heaped

upon him came to appear as less than his due ; and the withholding of the crown-matrimonial as an intolerable deprivation and insult. Few people at the time, and none enjoying the advantage of historical perspective, could deny that Mary was wise in her hesitation to confer upon that vain, sulky, ill-natured youth, an honour carrying with it so much power.

Riccio became the object of Darnley's jealous passion, and Morton, Ruthven, Lethington, and the other Protestant Lords, who were uneasy at the Italian's employment upon matters of State, saw in Darnley's disaffection an opportunity of recovering to themselves and their exiled confederates the power which the Queen had taken into her own hands.

The intimacy with which the Queen favoured Riccio inevitably gave rise to rumours that their relations were immoral. Weeks before the Italian paid the penalty for his mistress's favour, that garbage-can of gossip, Randolph, Elizabeth's Scottish ambassador, had written to Leicester : “Woe is me for you when David sone shall be kynge of England.” It was, of course, commonly known by that time that the Queen was pregnant. To this Randolph—whom Mary was compelled to banish from Scotland for treasons and insolence, early in 1566—must be given the palm for the dissemination of evil reports, upon which is founded the credited legend that Riccio was Mary's lover, as well as her counsellor. Before documenting his indirect malignings, with other extant evidence bearing upon this charge against the Queen, it is necessary to emphasise the importance of the dates on which the allegations were written. They were all, with the exception of the one quoted above, written immediately after the flight of Moray and the rebel Lords into England. As, after Carberry Hill, Moray was to alter his published reason for capturing and imprisoning the Queen, and produced the Casket Letters to serve that purpose ; so now he needed some other pretext for his rebellion than his objection to Mary's Catholic marriage as endangering Protestantism. So we find, as soon as he has reached Newcastle from Carlisle, and is in

touch with Randolph and Bedford, the news of Mary's alleged immoral relations with Riccio being forwarded to the English Court, from which Moray is still expecting help to make a fresh attempt to depose his sister.

Moray crossed to England, and reached Carlisle about October 6th, and proceeded to Newcastle. On October 13th, Randolph wrote to London: "She (Mary) knoweth that he (Moray) understandeth some such secret part (not to be named for reverence sake) that standeth not with her honour. . . . Here is the mischief, this is the grief, and how it may be salved and repaired, it passeth, I trow, man's wit to consider."

On October 18th, Randolph wrote to Leicester, that Mary "has been brought to that extremity that the fame she had gotten through virtue and worthiness is now clean fallen from her, as though neither the one nor the other had been known unto her. . . . What men most complain of (and in his judgment has been the chief cause of this mischief) in this place shall not be spoken of."

These are Randolph's chief contributions to the dishonouring of the Queen. There was also a statement by Bedford, in September, to Cecil, almost certainly based on gossip derived from Randolph, that the countenance that Mary showed to David was something he would not write of, for the honour due to the person of the Queen. Further support of the allegation, from English sources, is in a letter from De Foix, the French ambassador, who, on October 16th, reports that Elizabeth had remarked to him that Mary hated Moray because she had been told that he "wished to hang an Italian named David, whom she loved and favoured, giving him more credit and authority than was consistent with her affairs and honour."

Five months later, a few days before Riccio was murdered, Bedford and Randolph combined in writing to Cecil, that Darnley "hath assured knowledge of such usage of herself as altogether is intolerable to be borne, which if it were not over well known, we would both be

very loath to think that it could be true. To take away this occasion of slander, he is himself determined to be at the apprehension and execution of him whom he is able manifestly to charge with the crime, and to have done him the most dishonour that can be to any man, much more being as he is. We need not more plainly to describe the person : you have heard of the man whom we mean of."

Other evidence that has been adduced to serve the ends of those who wish to convince themselves that the Queen had honoured Riccio with the freedom of her body, includes the statement in Ruthven's *Relation*, that Darnley accused his wife of unfaithfulness with Riccio, during the angry passages that passed between them after the murder. When Darnley visited Mary's chamber, after the birth of Prince James, she said : " My lord, God has given you and me a son, begotten by none but you . . . My Lord, here I protest to God, and as I shall answer to Him at the great day of judgment, this is your son, and no other man's son. And I am desirous that all here, both ladies and others, bear witness ; for he is so much your own son, that I fear it will be worse for him hereafter."

Some ingenious commentators are of opinion that this insistence upon Darnley's paternity is proof that the Queen had had relations with Riccio, but only after the conception of the child. To less prejudiced judgment, these words may appear of contrary significance. The Queen knew of the slanders that had been alleged, knew that Darnley had been disposed to credit them, and knew further, that her enemy subjects would be only too happy if they could cast doubt upon the legitimacy of the heir. As long as the prince lived, the best that Moray could hope for, after deposing his mother, would be the Regency, and not the crown.

The foregoing paragraphs contain the weightiest of the evidence of the alleged immoral relations between Mary and the Piedmontese. There are no earlier affairs of the kind which can be cited to prove that the Queen was indifferent to the preservation of her dignity and

chastity. The only semblance of an accusation of im-morality is the case of the young French poet, Chastelard. It is impossible, however, to give credit to Knox's innuendo, based, as he affirms, on Moray's word, that the Queen had trusted her honour to Chastelard's keeping. History only records that the Queen, because he was well recommended, treated Chastelard with the playful familiarity with which Court poets were customarily treated ; that he twice secreted himself in her bed-chamber, and, having laid violently amorous hands upon her, was tried and executed for his pretentious insolence. Reliable investigators have not hesitated to state, upon sound arguments, that Chastelard was a secret emissary of Catherine of Medici, who sent him to Scotland for the express purpose of compromising the Queen's honour. Her object in this was to obstruct the negotiations for Mary's marriage with Don Carlos of Spain, against which Catherine was not less unscrupulously set than Elizabeth. It is certain that no misdemeanours of the Queen would have gone unrecorded by either Knox or Buchanan. It would be a fair statement of the case to say that, until the time when the Queen's favouritism of Riccio aroused the jealousy and hate of the nobles and Darnley, no more than a breath of scandal had touched her reputation as a chaste woman.

§3

Moray, in exile, was using every means at his disposal to obtain his pardon and recall. He besought Elizabeth to use her influence with Mary on his behalf, and Throckmorton almost succeeded in persuading the Queen of the political advisability of pardoning him and his fellow-rebels. Moray, whom Randolph alleged to have been so shocked at his sister's relations with Riccio, was not so sorely hurt as to prevent him from humbly appealing to the Italian to intercede for him, accompanying his plea with a diamond, and promises for the future. Riccio scornfully declined both the jewel and the suggestion ; and it seemed that Moray would be faced with the alternatives of either remaining indefinitely in exile, or answering

the Queen's summons to compear to the Parliament for forfeiture, in March.

The Riccio scandal could, however, serve his turn. Morton, Lennox, Ruthven and Lethington were as eager as Moray to remove the upstart from power ; and Darnley wanted him killed. Darnley also wanted the crown-matrimonial, and was prepared to barter extravagantly in order to obtain it. The conspirators in Scotland joined counsels with the exiles in England, and there proved to be no difficulty in arranging terms between the parties. Riccio was to be murdered ; Darnley was to get his crown ; Moray and his band of rebels were to be pardoned and reinstated ; Mary was to be imprisoned until Moray had the weak King under his thumb, and then either deposed, or allowed to retain the husk of sovereignty. If she, and her unborn child, died of the shock occasioned by the murder in her presence, so much the better for the bonny earl. These were the aims of the confederacy of Protestant nobles and Darnley against the twenty-three years old Queen.

Darnley, on condition that he was confirmed of the crown-matrimonial, undertook to give formal remission to Moray and his fellow-rebels for all their actions quarrels and crimes ; to stop their forfeiture, and permit them to return to Scotland without let or hindrance. Finally he undertook to establish the Reformed religion. The conspirators undertook, in addition to giving him the crown, to maintain his title to the crown, if the Queen died without issue, to spare neither life nor death in setting forward his honour *according to the word of God*, and to plead with the Queen of England for better treatment for his mother, who was still in the Tower.

The band for the removal of Riccio was signed by Moray, Argyll, Glencairn, Rothes, Boyd, and Ochiltree ; and, on March 6th, Darnley signed the document embodying the bargain by which he intended treacherously and secretly to betray the Queen. Moray had rebelled because he considered Darnley unfit to be husband to the Queen ; he had plotted to have the young man returned to Elizabeth. Now, by the simple treachery of remitting

Moray's crimes, Darnley's disabilities fall from him. No longer is he unfit to be King-consort, but is worthy of increased power; no longer is there "so little hope that he would be a favourer or setter forth of Christ's true religion"; instead he has become the promised champion of that religion, by virtue of a display of murder and treason. "*He was a braw, braw gallant,*" the Earl of Moray.

The details of the plot were swiftly completed. The murder of Riccio should take place in Holyrood Palace on Saturday, March 9th; Moray and his fellow-rebels should arrive in Edinburgh on the Sabbath, thus demonstrating their blameless and submissive intention to appear, as summoned, before Parliament two days later to hear their forfeiture pronounced. The Parliament should be dismissed by Darnley's Proclamation before it could deal with that awkward business. All of this was to happen according to plan. Everything was provided for, even the dangerous condition of the young Queen, seven months gone with Darnley's child.

§4

On the appointed Saturday evening, the Queen was at supper with her illegitimate half-brother and half-sister, Lord Robert Stewart and the Countess of Argyll, and there were also present Bethune of Creich, Arthur Erskine, and David Riccio. Darnley came into the room unexpectedly, by way of his private stair, and took the seat which his wife offered him, beside her. It was unusual for Darnley to join her at meals in those days, and Mary was still puzzling over the problem as to why he had come, when the curtains which separated the boudoir from the antechamber were flung apart, to reveal Lord Ruthven, haggard and pale from illness, yet clad in full armour.

His sudden intrusion, following immediately upon the unlooked-for appearance of Darnley, was ominous; but, before the Queen could utter a word, Ruthven made clear the object of his visit. He himself has recorded how he cried to the favoured Italian to come forth at once from

the privy-chamber, where he had been too long; how Riccio shrank out of his chair, and cowered, with blanched cheeks, in the window embrasure behind the Queen. The coincidence of her husband's appearance with Ruthven's outrageous conduct in bursting into her presence stirred her quick suspicion, and she turned to Darnley and demanded whether he knew anything of this enterprise. He denied any knowledge of it, whereupon the Queen imperiously ordered Ruthven to retire. The indomitable conspirator stood his ground, despite Darnley's defection, and recounted to Mary the precise faults of Riccio which were responsible for his taking her favourite from her. Ruthven then started forward to seize the craven Italian, bidding Darnley take the Queen, his wife and sovereign to him.

Caught unawares though she was, the Queen's surprise was already past. She sprang to her feet and placed herself between her threatened secretary and the intruder. Lord Robert and Erskine made as if to stay Ruthven by force, but were angrily ordered to lay no hand on him, "for he would not be handled." Riccio, gripping a dagger in one trembling hand, clung to the Queen's robe with the other, screaming with fright: "Save me, oh! save me!"

The Queen's fear that worse was to follow was instantly confirmed by a sudden rush of a numerous armed band into the room. Astounded but fearless, she stood her ground, while chairs and table were overturned, and pandemonium broke loose around her. As the table was overset, the Countess of Argyll managed to snatch one of the candlesticks, and the ugly scene was played out in the light of a single dip.

Ruthven, irritated by the Queen's opposition, pushed her into Darnley's arms, bidding her not to be afraid as nothing was intended against her. She struggled free of detaining arms, only to find a pistol held against her body by George Douglas, or some other conspirator. The pregnant Queen was helpless, and could only stand and watch the screaming Riccio being dragged out of the boudoir, across the antechamber, to be flung down in the

doorway. A roar of hate and vengeance drowned the groans of the victim as the conspirators fell upon him. Fifty-seven wounds, from daggers and whinyards, were counted upon the body after the corpse had been flung down the stairs and stripped. The King's own dagger, which George Douglas had thrust into the Italian to prove his complicity in, and consent, to, the deed, was specially noted among the weapons found buried in the corpse.

In the boudoir, Mary, when the tumult outside had subsided, asked what had been done to Riccio. When they answered that he had been killed, she turned upon Darnley, accusing him. He retorted in a mood of triumphant rage, accusing her of having given to the Italian the privileges of bed and board that were his by right. According to Ruthven's account, he reminded her that she had promised him obedience on the day of their marriage and that he should be participant and equal with her in all things, but that she had used him otherwise, "by the persuasion of David." This remark makes it obvious that it was the withholding of the crown-matrimonial that rankled, rather than his fear of the Queen's infidelity.

Mary answered him with dignity: "My Lord, all the offence that is done me, you have the knowledge thereof, for the which I shall be your wife no longer, nor lie with you any more, and shall never like well till I cause you as sorrowful a heart as I have at this present."

Ruthven intervened upon this exposure of soiled linen, bidding Mary be of good comfort, to entertain her husband, and depend for counsel upon her nobility, maintaining that her government would be as prosperous as in any King's day.

The leader of the assassins had risen from a sick-bed to perform his office, and was now so overcome with weakness, that he craved permission of the Queen to be allowed to sit, calling for drink, in God's name. The Queen gave him leave to sit, and a Frenchman brought him a glass of wine. The irony of the situation seems to have struck her—her secretary torn from her presence

and murdered, her own person man-handled, and in danger of a miscarriage; and the cause of it all begging for leave to sit and drink wine in her presence to relieve the exhaustion brought on by his outrageous conduct.

“Is this your sickness?” she asked him.

“God forbid,” he answered, self-pityingly, “your Majesty had such a sickness.”

His ironic-sounding concern that she should ever suffer as he was suffering angered the Queen, and her retort is an indication of the physical effect of the late terrible scene upon her.

“If I die of my child,” she said, “or my commonweal perish, I will leave the revenge thereof to my friends, to be taken of you and your posterity. The King of Spain, and the Emperor, are my great friends, likewise the King of France, my good brother; and my uncle of Lorraine, besides the Pope’s Holiness, and many princes of Italy.”

Ruthven answered, without notable coherence, to the effect that he sincerely hoped that neither the child, herself, nor her commonweal should perish, and that there was not a man within the Palace but would honour and serve her Majesty as became good subjects, and would suffer no harm to come to her body more than to their own hearts. And, he concluded, if anything be done that night which her Majesty disliked, “the King your husband, and none of us, is in the wyte.” This strange statement the King confessed to be true.

Sounds of a new uproar in the Palace grounds brought the exhausted lord to his feet, and he hastened away at his best pace to discover what was doing. He found that Huntly, Bothwell, and Atholl had been making an attempt to force a way through to the Queen’s apartments, but had been driven to the refuge of their apartments by superior numbers. Ruthven went to them and explained what had been happening, and told them that Moray and the other exiles were expected in Edinburgh next day. He left the partially enlightened nobles, after taking a glass of wine with them. During the night Bothwell and

Hunty escaped from the Palace by a window, to hold themselves in readiness to serve the Queen.

The good citizens of Edinburgh, alarmed by the uproar, armed themselves and went to Holyrood, demanding to know whether the Queen was safe. Mary would have gone forward to reassure them, but she was under close guard by this time, and was told savagely that, if she attempted to address the crowd, she would be cut up into collops and thrown to the people. The task of quietening the anxiety of her subjects devolved upon Darnley who, assuring them that all was well with the Queen, persuaded them to return to their homes.

Little more could be done that night. The King allowed Atholl, Sutherland, Caithness, and Lethington, Sir James Balfour and others who would not be wanted to participate in the ensuing negotiations with the Queen, to leave the Palace. Mary was imprisoned in her rooms in solitary confinement, being denied even her serving-women, despite—or, more probably, because of—the appreciated danger of premature childbirth supervening on such experiences as she had just endured. Darnley, we are told, went to his own bed, and slept soundly.

On the next day, the Sabbath, Darnley's Proclamation was issued according to plan. Parliament was prorogued, and all its members were ordered to leave Edinburgh instantly. All that remained to be done was for the plotters to force the Queen to confirm Darnley's remission of the crimes of the exiled Lords who were arriving in the capital during the day. That done, the decision was to pack her off, a prisoner, to Stirling, until her confinement was over.

§5

Mary had been caught napping. Her secret intelligencers had failed her miserably. The triumph of the Protestant rebels seemed complete. She spent Saturday night pacing the floor, confronting the sudden problem with the intrepidity of spirit and fertility of brain which never failed her in times of crisis. Her difficulty was that she was in the dark as to the exact ramifications of the

conspiracy, of which the murder of Riccio was an incident only. That must be so, or she would be at liberty now instead of being confined to her room, under strict guard. She had learnt, before retiring, that Bothwell and Huntly had succeeded in escaping, and it was upon the help that they could be relied upon to render that her hopes became fixed. The problem of communicating with them remained unsolved when Sunday dawned.

Her immediate personal plight was bad enough, but the blow that had been dealt to her new policy was of irremediable effect. The death of Riccio, in the particular circumstances of a Palace revolution, rendered unavailing all the scheming and preparation upon which she had embarked for the joint achievement of Catholic restoration and a bid for the English throne. The Lords who had held aloof from Moray's rebellion had now turned upon her on their own account, with the King as their accomplice. She was isolated and bewildered.

She greeted her husband pleasantly, when he visited her in the early afternoon, dissembling her anger and suspicion. He was relieved to find her mood so much softer than it had been the previous night, and promised that she should be allowed the attendance of her gentlewomen. He would see Morton about it. About the plot he was uncommunicative, probably pleading ignorance; and he deplored the cruel way in which Riccio had been murdered. Darnley always maintained, even when his complicity had been established by Mary's sight of the incriminating documents, that his intention had never been more severe than to have Riccio apprehended.

Mary was able to learn some fragments of news from her ladies; and in the evening she heard that the Earl of Moray had returned, and was supping with the Earl of Morton in his Palace apartments. She sent a request that her half-brother should come to her, concealing her surprise that he should have returned to answer the summons to hear his forfeiture. The Queen's wits were working swiftly. She decided to greet Moray forgivingly, and, when he came to her, assured him of her belief that had he been home a day sooner, the others would not

have used her so shamefully. The earl's eyes filled with tears at this expression of his sister's trust, and he assured her that he had known nothing of the murder of Riccio, until his arrival that day. The tears that flowed while he uttered this lie seemed to convince the Queen that he was speaking the simple truth: at least, she acted as though she was so convinced. It was too late for Moray to do anything that night, and the Queen retired to puzzle over the situation in a more hopeful mood.

The King, meanwhile, was impatient to enjoy, without further delay, the pleasant fruits of Riccio's death. He crept up the private staircase communicating between his suite and the Queen's, and begged to be allowed his privileges and rights, telling her, through the closed door, that the Lords wished very much that he should spend the night with her. The Queen, unmoved by this curious pleading, was unresponsive, and sent him back to his bed unsatisfied. He spent a miserable night, plagued with doubt as to what benefits he was actually to derive from the plot. He returned to the Queen's chamber door in the early morning, abject and dispirited. Mary relented, and allowed him to go in to her, and, in a short space of time, she had cajoled him into telling her all that he dared about the full meaning of the outrage of Saturday night. The crocodile quality of Moray's tears became apparent; and it was also obvious that Darnley was holding back some essential particulars, which would have explained what benefits he hoped to gain from his treacherous league with the gang of murderers. She had learnt enough, however, to enable her to convince him that he had allowed himself to be made the dupe of her unscrupulous nobles, and to persuade him that the only safe course left open for him was to join with her in hoodwinking her enemies.

There is some disparity in the contemporary accounts of what happened during Monday, and the precise means that the Queen evoked to outwit the Lords. It is certain that, when the returned Lords waited upon her, she unhesitatingly agreed verbally to pardon them, offering

“to put all things into oblivion as if they had never been.” She then bade them draw up the necessary articles of pardon for her signature, and spent the ensuing hour walking hand in hand with Darnley and Moray in the outer chamber.

According to Claude Nau, afterwards Mary’s secretary, whose *History of Mary Stewart* is largely based upon her own revelations to him, the Queen returned to the ante-chamber with the intention of taking leave of the Lords, who were preparing documents for her signature. She had promised Moray, while they had been walking together, that the Lords, himself included, should have a signed and sealed pardon; and had suggested that, this point being settled, the Lords need stay no longer. A collation of the various records makes it clear that the Lords had made good use of their time, and had prepared the articles during the Queen’s promenade, and had them ready for her signature when she re-entered the room. Mary had been acting on the principle that, being virtually a prisoner, she was rightly entitled to promise anything in order to gain her liberty to act as she wanted to, and not as she was being forced to act under duress. Her discretion was justified by the fact that the Lords had already decided to imprison her in the castle at Stirling, as soon as she had subscribed their pardons.

Nau records that, at this point in the conference, the Queen had seated herself, and was immediately asked to sign the documents which had been prepared. She was driven into a corner, from which there seemed to be no outgait. Once those pardons were signed, her chief bargaining power would have gone. It may have been that the shock of finding herself in this dilemma did have an acute physical reaction—though, remembering her long ride to Dunbar a few hours later, this seems doubtful. However that may have been, the anxious Lords were suddenly startled by the spectacle of the Queen writhing and almost swooning, as if in the pangs of labour, and begging that a midwife should be fetched immediately. Tough characters as they were, even the Lords could not

insist upon a woman, apparently on the point of giving birth, signing documents.

The Queen escaped to her room, the midwife was called in, and loyally confirmed her royal mistress's fears. The Lords had supper, after which Darnley came down for the articles, so that the Queen might sign them the first moment that she was able to guide a quill. He reassured them by undertaking personal responsibility for the Queen's detention, and the Lords took their departure.

Mary, whatever her physical condition, spent some of her now very valuable time in reiterating to Darnley the arguments she had already used to show him how the Lords had duped him. She pointed out that, by his folly, he had ruined, probably irretrievably, her great project for winning the English throne for them both, by condoning the murder of a good and faithful servant who was irreplaceable. She even argued him round to admitting that Riccio had been all that she maintained, and nothing more. This accomplished, she had no difficulty in persuading him to join her in the daring escape that she had already planned, with the help of Arthur Erskine, her Master of Horse.

At dead of night they stole through the kitchen quarters out of the Palace, traversing the burial-ground in which lay the body of the good and faithful servant. Darnley called his wife's attention to the grave, with some indiscreet comment that made her forget for a moment the rôle she was playing, for she is said to have answered him that "it should go very hard with her but that a fatter than he should lie near to him ere one twelvemonth were at an end." This reputed saying only came to light when her enemies were seeking evidence to prove her complicity in Darnley's murder, and, is, therefore, probably apocryphal.

Darnley found an opportunity to prove his mettle during the long ride to Dunbar. The Queen rode pillion behind Arthur Erskine, who, on account of her condition, set a moderate pace. The King, crazed with fear of discovery and pursuit by the accomplices whom he had betrayed, called wildly for greater speed, and, riding

behind the Queen's horse, whipped it into a gallop. Erskine pulled up, and disgustedly bade the King ride on to safety at his own pace, and leave them to follow. According to Nau, Darnley accepted the advice, and was already in Dunbar Castle when the Queen and her companions arrived.

CHAPTER FIVE

PRELUDE TO DISASTER

§1

THE Queen, in making good her escape to Dunbar and carrying the King with her, had evaded the worst immediate effects intended by the joint conspirators. In persuading Darnley to throw in his lot with her, she had taken out the king-pin, and the edifice of the plot had collapsed. The Lords lacked the semblance of authority which the King's signature would have given them for the continuance of their plan to give to their leader the governing power. Nevertheless the Queen's difficulties remained tremendous, and the importance of the decision she had to make could not be exaggerated.

Moray and his associates, although still legally exiles, were abroad in Scotland ; and Morton, Ruthven, and the other Riccio conspirators would have to be summoned for their crime and outlawed as rebels. To set against this confederation of rebels, she had Bothwell and Huntly and a few other unimportant and uninfluential supporters. Parliament had been prorogued by her fool of a husband, and the members had already dispersed to their homes. In the circumstances it was neither practicable nor advisable to confirm the forfeiture of Moray and his fellow-rebels. It was impossible to attempt to carry on the government of the realm if she were to drive them, as well as the Riccio murderers, into exile. The powerful Protestants among her subjects would support their leaders if she attempted to do this. One group or the other must be pardoned.

It is difficult to see how, situated as she was with the Riccio horror still fresh in her mind and the dissimulation

of Moray still effective, the Queen could have come to any decision other than the one she took. Yet, for the safety of her own future, Mary would have done better to have pardoned the Riccio murderers, and to have returned Moray to his spiritual home in Elizabeth's sanctuary. She decided, however, after a few days' hesitation, to pardon Moray and his associates, and they came to her singly to receive remission for their crimes and reinstatement of their lands.

By this act of clemency she sealed her doom. The truncated success of the Riccio murder plot served the Earl of Moray's ends as well as its full success would have done. He had long schooled himself to play a waiting game.

Moray's rebellion had driven Mary to rely upon Riccio to forward the policy which she had adopted as the only alternative to the one that had been rendered impossible by the consequences of his rebellion. By his plotting with the erstwhile loyal Lords for the murder of Riccio, her own virtual deposition, and Darnley's nominal exaltation, his sole object had been to return to Scotland and pursue his ambition of usurping her throne. Despite the fact that she had partially outwitted the plotters, his main object had been achieved.

Queen Elizabeth had admittedly failed Moray, but this was simply an instance of English policy towards unsuccessful Scottish rebels. Mary knew, and time was to prove, that Elizabeth would give him all the help he might need once he should come to her with assurance of success.

Mary took the only apparent course open to her, hoping that her clemency might be rewarded by loyalty; and held on to Bothwell as the only powerful noble who had been consistently loyal to her mother and herself.

So, as one set of rebels fled into England on account of their share in the Riccio episode, the other set who had returned from that country to answer for their crimes were pardoned and reinstated. John Knox escaped with his uneasy conscience to Kyle, in Ayrshire, where he busied himself with writing his history, and penned the passage in which he merrily approved the murder of

Seigneur Davie. There is no proof, beyond the significance of his sudden flight, that the Reformer was art or part in the plot. His complicity was evidently sufficiently apparent to cause him to be deserted by that courage which, in happier times, had enabled him to look unafraid into the pleasing face of a gentlewoman. Lethington, less perturbed by his conscience than by the fact that Bothwell, who hated him, was for the moment all-powerful at Court, decided upon a discreet retirement to Blair Atholl, until the unexampled situation should develop. The Queen's present attitude towards him was signalled by the transference to Bothwell of the Abbey of Haddington, which hitherto Lethington had held in gift from her.

Ten days after the murder, the Queen, accompanied by Bothwell, Huntly, Marischal, Hume, and Seton, rode triumphantly into Edinburgh, at the head of a cavalcade of three thousand horse, and took up residence in the Castle. The formal Proclamation was issued, summoning the conspirators for the murder; and another Proclamation declared the innocence of Darnley of any share in or knowledge of the murder. At this time, the Queen had not been fully informed of the details of the plot, and accepted Darnley's statement that he was not privy to the murder. A few weeks later his fellow-conspirators arranged for copies of the actual documents and bonds to be put into the Queen's hands. The irony of the proclamation of innocence became apparent, and what trust and hope she had still reposed in her husband were shaken for ever.

The mood in which Darnley acted during these stirring and anxious weeks was characteristic of his congenital witlessness. His failure to secure the coveted matrimonial-crown by conspiring with the Queen's enemies, and the shame which she visited upon him for stooping to such means to obtain it, diminished neither his sense of his right to it, nor his intention to have it. Nor did the removal of Riccio leave his jealousy quiescent longer than a few days. Before the Queen had left Dunbar for Edinburgh he was showing himself as jealous of Bothwell as

he had been of Riccio. He was further disgruntled by the disinclination of the Queen to give him the freedom of bed and board that he had expected, and by the natural contempt in which all the nobles held him. He had proved himself a double traitor—to the Queen and to his accomplices—and had lost the confidence and esteem of everyone.

Darnley positively complicated the Queen's difficulties by making no effort to dissemble his dislike of both Moray and Bothwell, despite the fact that he knew that one essential to effecting peace in her Council was to reconcile these two bitter enemies. Moray's detestation of Bothwell dated from events which occurred before Mary arrived in Scotland, and, until his rebellion, he had succeeded in forcing his foe to remain in exile more or less continuously. The cause of Moray's enmity was Bothwell's undeviating loyalty to Mary of Guise during that period when he and Knox were combining with Elizabeth to overthrow her. Bothwell had, on one occasion, intercepted Cockburn, laird of Ormistoun, and relieved him of a large sum of English gold which Moray needed badly; and had defied the efforts of him and Arran to recover it. From that day, Moray's enmity had been implacable. The task of effecting a reconciliation between these two drew upon all the wit and persuasiveness that Mary possessed, and even when she had accomplished it, there was little hope that it would endure longer than circumstances compelled it. The reality of Bothwell's reconciliation he speedily made apparent by urging Mary to put Moray in ward before her approaching confinement. His argument was that, if Moray were left at large while Mary was helpless in bed, he would bring home Morton and the other exiles, towards whom he felt the tenderness of a fellow-conspirator. The Queen however, resisted this advice, which, nevertheless, proved that Bothwell was not blind to the mark at which Moray shot.

On June 19th, 1566, the Queen gave birth to a son, and took the occasion already referred to, to assert before God that Darnley was the child's father.

Bothwell, who had been absent from Edinburgh during the time of the Queen's confinement, returned as soon as she was convalescent. His purpose to remove the Earl of Moray from favour and power had not been diverted by the Queen's coldness to his earlier advice to have him put in ward. The reasons which actuated him were probably mixed. Moray was cautiously creeping back into his sister's good graces. She had relied upon his counsel for so long, before his rebellion, that the temptation to believe in his goodwill must have been strong. His talk of forwarding Christ's true religion, which was the verbal mask behind which he hid his ambitions, may have had its effect upon the Queen. She may have believed his opposition to have been impersonal. Bothwell's self-interest made it imperative that this should not happen : that Moray must not resume his old ascendancy, the mantle of which had fallen upon his shoulders at Dunbar Castle. It is probable, however, that genuine concern for the Queen's safety was combined with self-interest in the motive that led him to reopen the question with her. His new suggestion was characteristic of a man incapable by temperament of half-measures. He boldly advised the Queen to allow George Douglas, a close relative of Darnley, publicly to accuse Moray, Lethington, and others of having been the advisers of the Riccio murder. Again Mary refused to do anything against Moray. Probably she thought that, having been outwitted twice, he was unlikely to challenge her power again.

As soon as her strength permitted her to travel, the Queen went to stay at the Earl of Mar's seat, at Alloa, whither she was taken by boat by Bothwell's retainers. She went there for recreation, and passed the days with sport, dancing, and masques, with her host, Bothwell, and others for company. She passed from Alloa to Stirling, where Darnley visited her, only to receive a cold answer to his unchanging demands for a share of her bed and board, and the matrimonial-crown. After some time spent in hunting, with Moray, Mar and Bothwell, at Megatland and Glenartan, she returned to Holyrood.

On one of his brief visits to her during this interlude, Darnley threatened that he would kill Moray, whom he now regarded as the adviser against his receiving his crown. He was quite incapable of realising that, far from anyone now wanting to give him the crown-matrimonial, the regret of the Queen and all her advisers was that he had been allowed to become any sort of king at all. No man in Scotland was more utterly and universally despised.

The Queen, ever since her escape to Dunbar, had begun to rely more and more upon her own judgment and intuition, rather than upon the advice of counsellors. Experience had taught her that none could be regarded as disinterested in her service, unless it was Bothwell, and him, as has been shown, she resisted whenever his advice was contrary to her views. Moray, as the leader of the Protestant Lords and clergy, she had to tolerate, but it would be long before she dared trust him again. Her need made her turn, again, towards Lethington, but it was only after months of working to modify Bothwell's hatred of him that she succeeded in overcoming her favourite's opposition to his return. In August or early September, 1566, Lethington came from Atholl, made his peace with the Queen and was reconciled by her to Bothwell in the presence of Argyll and Moray. He at once resumed his duties in his old post of Foreign Secretary, and Mary had again the assurance that she was represented by a match for Cecil in her English correspondence. It was no easy feat which the Queen had achieved in bringing together on terms of, at least, superficial amity, three men, one of whom would have been glad to see the other two either imprisoned or dead.

§2

In September it became necessary for the Queen to make arrangements for placing the young prince under the guardianship of the Earl of Mar. She accordingly went to stay in the Exchequer House, in Edinburgh, for the purpose of going over her personal accounts and

arranging the needful provisions for the child's maintenance. It was on this occasion, Buchanan, in his *Detection*, alleges, that Mary had relations with Bothwell. He supports this statement by alleging that it is based upon a confession which Mary made to Moray and his mother, at Lochleven. There is no reference to such a confession in Moray's evidence before the sittings of the York or Westminster commissions, at which he was proferring everything possible to prove the Queen's dishonour. It is, none the less, true that when Darnley apprised his wife of his intention to visit her, while she was at Exchequer House, she decided to go back to Holyrood to receive him. His reception was as cold as it always had been since Mary had discovered the extent of his treachery to her in the Riccio conspiracy, and he seems now to have become desperate. He saw du Croc, the French ambassador, and informed him that he meant to leave the country and go on a voyage. Lennox, his father, hearing this news, wrote to the Queen asking her to use her influence to prevent him. Next day Darnley appeared at the palace, and, according to du Croc, "when he and the Queen were a-bed together," the Queen endeavoured to make him disclose the intention of his proposed journey. He refused to be drawn. His speeches and conduct were such that Mary could not leave the matter there. She had learnt, from the Riccio scandal, how serious results can rise from vaguely worded suspicions. Therefore, in the morning, she brought him with her before the Council and the French ambassador, taking him by the hand and beseeching him for God's sake to declare if she had given him any occasion for his decision to go abroad. She gave him every encouragement to deal plainly, and state what he could or would, "without sparing her." According to the Council's letter dealing with this meeting, he would "not at all own that he intended any voyage or had any discontent, and declared fully that the Queen had not given him any occasion for any." Since Darnley had had no hesitation in accusing the Queen of dubious intimacy with Riccio, before the plotters, he would have had as little compunction in accusing her now, had he had any-

thing in the way of evidence or rumour to support him. It may be added that the Council told him that he ought to thank God for giving him so wise and virtuous a wife. From these facts, it seems evident that neither Darnley nor any member of the Council had at that time any suspicion of the relations between the Queen and Bothwell which Buchanan alleges.

On October 8th the Queen left Edinburgh for Jedburgh to hold a justice eyre, or an assize, and on her journey received news that Bothwell had been seriously wounded in a fight with a borderer named Elliot, on the previous day. She was naturally concerned at the possibility of losing her principal councillor and stay, but she passed on to Jedburgh and remained there for six days dispensing justice, before reassuring herself as to his condition. A message reached her from Bothwell that he believed he was dying of his wounds. Accompanied by Moray and others, she rode to the Hermitage, where Bothwell was, spent two hours with him, and returned the same day—the whole distance being about sixty miles. It was a notable ride, but hardly as remarkable as some commentators hold it to have been. The theory of the Mariphobes is that no sane woman would have undertaken such a ride merely to reassure herself as to the health of her principal minister; but that, once it is assumed that the minister was also the lover, the ride becomes understandable. Mary Stewart was a great horsewoman and a devoted mistress; she had, in an advanced state of pregnancy, ridden through the night from Holyrood to Dunbar after two days of recurrent crises; she had spent a good part of the summer in healthy exercise, and she was not yet twenty-four years old. The physical feat of riding sixty miles in a day was one that she could readily have undertaken for a less important reason.

Ignoring for a moment the possibility that Bothwell was, by this time, her lover—had Mary any reasonable grounds to be so solicitous about the outcome of his illness? He was still the man upon whom she placed most reliance to keep a curb on Moray and the other rebellious Lords; and, if he died, there was no one strong or bold

enough to restrain them. He was essential to the continuance of the power that she had succeeded in establishing and maintaining since the Riccio disaster. In a political sense he was to her what Darnley, as King, should have been. The instinct for self-preservation was adequate stimulus for the famous Jedburgh ride, without the spur of a guilty passion.

If it is true that Mary had already succumbed to this passion for Bothwell, it is demonstrable that either she was always deserted by her normal intelligence in her dealings with him, or that she deliberately sought in a blatantly vulgar fashion to advertise to the world that their intimacy was immoral. The sequel to her ride to Jedburgh was the arrival of Bothwell, at the Queen's request, as soon as he could travel by horse-litter, and his being accommodated in the house in which she was lodged. If the Queen and her Minister were lovers, anxious to keep their guilt secret, it would be difficult to conceive of a plan—following upon the dramatic ride—less calculated to secure that end. Moray was present during the Queen's interview with Bothwell, and must have overheard the details of her invitation to him to come to Jedburgh; yet he does not appear to have regarded it as anything but what a minister might expect in the way of courtesy from his sovereign.

Whether from the over-exertion of the long ride, or, as she alleged, the distress of mind caused by Darnley's behaviour, the Queen was taken seriously ill when she returned from the Hermitage. For several days her life was despaired of, and on one occasion it was thought she was dead. Her women got ready their mourning, and, says Nau, "the Earl of Moray began to lay hands on the most precious articles, such as her silver plate and rings." Public prayers were said in Edinburgh, or as Knox put it: "There was continually prayers publicly made at the Church of Edinburgh, and divers other places, for her conversion towards God and amendment." He also referred to her illness as "the time when the Queen was stricken by God's hand in Jedburgh."

The Queen herself, before her illness had reached its crisis of continuous unconsciousness and rigour, expected that her end was approaching. She said to the Lords gathered in her bedchamber : “ Ye know, my Lords, the favour that I have borne unto you since my arriving in this realm, and that I have pressed none of you that profess the religion to a worship that your conscience does not approve. I pray you also on your part not to press them that make profession of the old Catholic faith ; and if indeed you knew what it is to a person in such an extremity as I am, you would never press them. I pray you, brother,” she concluded, turning to the Earl of Moray, “ that ye trouble none.”

Bothwell had arrived in a horse-litter, and was lodged in rooms below the Queen’s, before the illness had reached its crisis. It is significant that there is not the least hint in the known records of any reference to the Queen having asked to see him when she believed that she was dying. When she had recovered, Bothwell was also convalescent, and they spent much time together, as, being in the same house, they could scarcely avoid doing. The explanation of the coincidence that he was lodged in the same house seems to have been that the presence of the Queen and her Court had taxed the available accommodation of the town to the limit. When Darnley came to visit his wife, twelve or thirteen days after the beginning of her illness, he was hard put to it to find a lodging for the night. As the author of the *Diurnal of Occurrents* says : “ he was not so well entertained as need should have been.” This remark is over-kind to that impossible young man. His latest exploit was characteristic. Despairing of ever receiving the crown-matrimonial either by plotting, or by gift from the disillusioned Queen, he conceived the wild idea that he might be able to prove himself to Catholic Europe as a champion of the old faith. His preliminary move to this end was to write to the King of France, the King of Spain and the Pope complaining that Mary was lukewarm in the faith. According to Knox “ by some knave this poor Prince was betrayed and the Queen got a copy of these letters into her hands, and therefore

threatened him sore ; and there was never after that any appearance of love betwixt them."

§3

The Queen, when she had recovered her health, went on a short progress, accompanied by her Lords and about a thousand horse, going by way of Kelso, Berwick, Coldingham, and Dunbar to Craigmillar Castle. The supposition that her breakdown was caused as much by distress of mind as by the exhaustion of her ride to the Hermitage is strengthened by an incident which occurred at Kelso. At this town she received letters from Darnley, but what their contents were has not been reported. Their effect upon her was so alarming that she, and those who were with her, feared a renewal of her sickness. "Sair greeting and tormenting herself miserably, as if she would have fallen in the same sickness that she was in before, (she) said that without she were quit of ye King by one means or tother she could never have one good day in her life and rather or she failed therein would not be set by to be ye instrument of her own death."

Mary and her train reached Craigmillar on November 20th, a little less than a month before the day fixed for the baptism of the infant Prince James. The desperate state into which she had been thrown by Darnley's latest activities caused her Council such concern that they met to discuss whether some means could not be devised to deliver her from him. Prior to any formal meeting of the Council, of which there is no precise record, Moray and Lethington debated the problem together privately, and then approached Argyll with a proposal that a divorce should be effected. Argyll seems to have agreed to this course ; and, on the three Lords sounding Huntly and Bothwell, it was agreed to put the suggestion to the Queen. She was at first of the same opinion as her Council, that divorce would be the best method of ridding herself of Darnley's insufferable incubus ; but doubts were expressed as to whether a divorce might not prejudice the legitimacy of the Prince. Their marriage having taken place before the receipt of the necessary Dispensa-

tion from the Pope, there was grave cause to hesitate, as the union might, on the reopening of the whole matter by divorce proceedings, be proved null and void by Catholic law. In the end, the Queen declared against the solution by divorce, and Lethington assured her that some other way would be found, and that Moray would "look through his fingers thereto, and will behold our doings saying nothing to the same."

In anticipation of a right understanding of the ensuing events, it is necessary to note particularly the attitude of the Queen towards Lethington's enigmatical proposal. The vagueness of his meaning evidently alarmed her, since she instantly insisted that *nothing should be done whereby any spot might be laid to her honour and conscience.* "And there I pray you," she added, "let the matter be in the estate as it is, abiding till God in his goodness put remedy thereto; that you believing to do me service, may possibly turn to my hurt and displeasure." Maitland reassured her on this point by saying that if she would allow them to guide the matter amongst themselves, she would "see nothing but good and approved by Parliament."

The foregoing account of the Craigmillar conference is extracted, in the main, from the *Protestation* which Mary drew up when preparing her defence in captivity, and sent to Huntly and Argyll to sign. In the *Lennox Papers*, first published by Andrew Lang, it is amplified without being contradicted on any essential point. Lennox states that the Lords met, in the absence of the Queen and Moray, and decided to adopt the plan of arresting and imprisoning Darnley, and of trying him for high treason—probably on the ground of his having warded the Queen at the time of the Riccio murder. This meeting probably occurred after that at which Mary and Moray were present, since it dealt with matters directly bearing upon Lethington's assurance to the Queen as to devising a way that would be good and approved by Parliament. Another document dealing with this conference, signed by Argyll and Huntly, among others, states: "They caused make offers to our said Sovereign Lady, if her

Grace would give remission to them that were banished at that time, to find causes of divorce, other for consanguinity, in respect they alleged the dispensation was not published, or else for adultery ; or then to get him convicted of treason, because he consented to her Grace's detention in ward ; or what other ways to dispatch him ; which altogether her Grace refused, as is manifestly known."

The outcome of the Craigmillar conference was that a " band " was subscribed by the principal Lords for the removal, or destruction, of Darnley. Moray, who may already have begun to look through his fingers, denied having signed this instrument. Hay of Tallo, one of Bothwell's dependents, confessed on the scaffold that he had seen it, and that among the subscribers were Bothwell, Huntly, Argyll, Lethington, and Sir James Balfour. According to Ormiston's confession, all of these, except Bothwell, signed the band.

Mary's refusal to approve any of the suggestions put forward to her, and her express desire to abide till God of his goodness supplied a remedy, together with another wish that she stated to the Lords, that Darnley might be given another chance to amend, were all ignored by the Council. As far as she personally was concerned the proposals of her Lords for ridding her of Darnley were made unavailing by her refusal to consider them. The subject was never again raised by them with her.

Lennox states that the project of apprehending Darnley and trying him for high treason was temporarily abandoned, owing to the premature arrival of some of the representatives of foreign states, who had come to attend the baptism of the Prince, on December 17th.

The preparations for this event occupied the Queen during the short interval between it and the residence at Craigmillar. The Lords proved docile and acquiescent, and made no attempt to prevent the ceremony being performed according to precise Catholic rites and custom. For the safety of their reputations as good Protestants, they remained outside the chapel during the ceremony, but they took willing part in the prodigal festivities which

the Queen had provided. Darnley was the one blot upon a very bright occasion. He sulked in his private apartments, refusing to be present either at the baptism or the festivities which followed it. His conduct, if allowance is made for his weakness of character, was understandable, since he had not a single friend left among all the nobles, and Elizabeth had instructed her representative not to countenance him as King. The strain of his intolerable behaviour, combined with the unavoidable anxiety of carrying through her task as hostess on so notable an occasion, was sufficient to test sorely but not to break the gallant spirit of the Queen. Six days after the baptism, du Croc, the French ambassador, wrote : "The Queen behaved herself admirably well all the time of the baptism ; and showed so much earnestness to entertain all the goodly company in the best manner, that this made her forget in a good measure her former ailments. But I am of the mind, however, that she will give us some trouble as yet ; nor can I be brought to think otherwise so long as she continues to be so pensive and melancholy. She sent for me yesterday and I found her laid on the bed weeping sore."

On the eve of Christmas—a feast which the *Book of Discipline* had abolished, but which still had special spiritual meaning to Catholic Mary—the Queen yielded to the combined importunities of Moray, Bothwell, Atholl, Bedford, and du Croc, and pardoned Morton and over seventy other participants in the Riccio conspiracy.

Clemency is said to become princes well, yet, in the event, the pardoning of the Riccio conspirators was destined only to hasten the doom that was approaching the Queen. The appeals of her so strangely unanimous Council, many of whom were individually personal foes, were actually part of the next move in the conspiracy against Darnley which had been inaugurated at Craigmillar. As the Moray gang and the Morton gang had all been mutually interested in the Riccio murder, so must the two sets of alternating exiles take a hand in the new plot, for a similar purpose. Morton had proved himself an efficient contriver of a political murder, and he

had efficient executive lieutenants ; and this time Darnley was the victim and not the dupe capable of playing traitor. So the Queen was persuaded to perform an act of Christian clemency on the eve of the birthday of Christ ; a fitting occasion on which to crown with a gracious act the baptism of her infant son. That argument must have been well-nigh irresistible to Mary.

The Earl of Moray heard the Queen's decision with special satisfaction. For all his good behaviour and patient dissembling, he had failed utterly to effect the transfer to himself of the position which Bothwell held in the Queen's favour. His sister still kept him at a distance, preferring Huntly and Atholl, and those who had shared in neither rebellion nor plot. The return of Morton and his associate Lords would re-establish the Protestant party in its old strength, and he would then be able to foment a situation that would enable him to drive Bothwell into exile again. Without Bothwell, the Queen would be easily handled. He would watch the development of the conspiracy against the King, and simulate increasing friendliness to Bothwell. The favourite was already arrogating to himself the position of King. He had been appointed by the Queen to receive the foreign guests, in place of the hapless Darnley. It was quite possible that his anxiety to make an end of that young man arose from a wild ambition to secure for himself the crown that Darnley was always begging for. Moray would wait and see whether his guess was justified and, if it were, he could encourage the Borderer. Let them kill Darnley, and let Bothwell wed the Queen, if necessary by force : Moray would still have his fingers to look through.

The day on which she granted the pardon, Mary set out with Bothwell for the seasonal festivities at Lord Drummond's house, and Darnley left Stirling for Glasgow. Mary and Bothwell, says the *Book of Articles*, "departed together towards Drymen, the Lord Drummond's house, abiding there five or six days, and from that came to Tullibardine. In what order they were chambered during their remaining in they two houses many found fault with it that durst not reprove it. How

lascivious also their behaviour was it was very strange to behold notwithstanding of the news of the King's grievous infirmity, who was departed to Glasgow and there fallen in deadly sickness."

Darnley had fallen a victim to smallpox, which disease was, according to Drury, spreading in Glasgow at the time; but, whatever lascivious behaviour Mary was indulging, it was not the cause of her delay in answering her husband's requests that she should go to him. She was herself in bed, Nau informs us, suffering from injuries resulting from a fall from a horse at Seton. In any case, Darnley did not now come first in her consideration, for, crowning his recent imbecilities, he had spoken at Stirling of a design that he had in mind to seize his son and govern Scotland in his name. If the crown-matrimonial was not to be had, then the crown-paternal must serve! On January 13th, possibly because of this report, Mary conveyed the prince from Stirling to Edinburgh, and on the 20th left the capital to visit Darnley.

CHAPTER SIX

THE TRIUMPH OF MORAY

§ I

THE Queen remained with her husband in Glasgow until he was well enough to travel, and they returned to Edinburgh either on the 31st of January or the 1st of February. The Palace of Holyrood was thought to lie unhealthily low, and Mary wished Darnley to spend his convalescence in Craigmillar Castle, but he expressed a preference for a house at Kirk-of-Field, which was within easy walking distance from the Palace. This house was prepared for him, and he was lodged in it on his arrival. Claude Nau states that his choice was against the Queen's wishes, but that Darnley insisted because he did not want anyone to see him until he had gone through a course of baths. The King was young enough not to have outgrown a proper vanity, and, while the ravages of the smallpox were still apparent, "he always wore a piece of taffeta drawn down over his face." It may be remarked that Darnley himself never uttered any of the objections as to the unworthiness of the house, which were put forward by contemporaries and critics, after the tragedy in which it was razed to the ground. He was content with its seclusion.

A bedroom was furnished for the Queen, immediately under that occupied by the King, and there she slept on two of the nine nights that Darnley stayed in the house. This fact of her staying in the house strengthens the belief that some degree of reconciliation had been effected during their stay in Glasgow. In addition to her desire to evince a wifely interest in him, Mary's purpose in going to Glasgow had been to use her influence to prevent him from carrying out his threat of leaving the country, and,

probably, to encourage him to the amendment of his ways, of which she had expressed a hope to the Lords at Craigmillar.

Mary spent the evening of February 9th with Darnley in his room, and left him towards midnight. There was a ball at the Palace that night in celebration of the marriage of Bastien, one of her gentlemen, which she had promised to attend. Otherwise, as she stated afterwards, she would have herself slept that night at Kirk-of-Field.

At two o'clock in the morning a violent explosion destroyed the house, and the bodies of Darnley and his servant were found lying naked in the garden with their clothes laid beside them. No marks were discovered that would indicate that they had come by their deaths through the explosion, and it is now generally accepted as a fact that they were strangled, either before the explosion took place, or when attempting to escape from the doomed house. Such are the bare facts of the movements of the Queen and Darnley prior to his death, which was the outcome of the band that had been signed at Craigmillar Castle.

The day before the murder, the Earl of Moray, having obtained a licence from the Queen to visit his sick wife, left Edinburgh for St. Andrews, and is reported to have said to his servant, *en route*, "This night, ere morning, Lord Darnley shall lose his life." With customary shrewdness he had established an incontestable alibi.

Rumour at once accused Bothwell of the crime. Placards were posted about Edinburgh naming him as the murderer. The Queen offered a reward of two thousand pounds to anyone who should discover the perpetrator of the ghastly crime. All the leading nobles knew who the man was. The Queen continued to retain him in favour.

Lennox, the murdered King's father, insisted on the trial of the murderer. The Queen promised at once that anyone he ventured to name should be tried. Lennox named Bothwell and agreed to prosecute him before the Court, but, for reasons of personal safety, he failed to appear on April 12th, the day appointed for the trial;

and Bothwell was acquitted on a "Not Guilty" verdict, after the Court had sat for eight hours.

Two days after the trial, the Queen opened Parliament, and Bothwell carried the sceptre before her, and his acquittal was ratified by Parliament.

On April 10th, two days before the trial, the Earl of Moray set out for France, determined to leave to others the execution of his latest plot, and to take such a course of action upon his return as the success or failure of his schemes should determine for him. As he had escaped being present in Edinburgh at the time of the crime, so he avoided being present at the framed trial of a criminal, whose guilt he shared with so many others.

On April 19th, Parliament was dissolved, and in the evening Bothwell gave a supper-party to the Lords in Ainslie's Tavern. When the Lords were sitting over their wine, Bothwell revealed the purpose of his hospitality by producing a "band," already signed by the departed Moray, alleging that its purport had the Queen's full approval, and persuaded every one of his guests, except the Lord Eglinton, to sign it. This band made the signatories first assert in unequivocal terms their conviction of Bothwell's innocence of the King's murder; and next to promise to support and stand by him with their lives and fortunes, and recommend him to the Queen as the most proper person she could have for a husband. The document concludes "And in case any will presume, directly or indirectly, to hinder or disturb the said marriage, so far as it may please our said sovereign Lady to allow, and therein shall spend and bestow our lives and goods, against all that live or die may, as we shall answer to God, and on our own fidelity and conscience. And in case we do in the contrary, never to have reputation or credit in no time hereinafter, but to be accounted unworthy and faithless traitors."

On April 24th, returning from a visit to her son at Stirling, the Queen was seized by Bothwell, between Linlithgow and Edinburgh, and taken with Lethington, Sir James Melville and others to Dunbar Castle. His pretext to the Queen was that he was saving her from some

vague danger, and she refused to allow her company to resist her capture, because she would have no blood shed on her account. On bringing the Queen to Dunbar, Bothwell raped her—according to his own confession, with the help of witchcraft and “sweet waters.” Melville, who was in the Castle, averred that the Queen could not help marrying her captor “seeing he had ravished her and lain with her against her will.”

Lady Jane Gordon, Bothwell’s wife, obtained a divorce from him on the ground of his adultery with a serving-wench. Bothwell obtained a divorce from his wife on the ground of consanguinity. The wife’s petition was granted by Protestants and the husband’s by Catholics,

The Queen, accompanied by Bothwell and his men, entered Edinburgh on May 6th; on May 12th she created him Duke of Orkney, and three days later they were married by Protestant rites in the Chapel at Holyrood Palace.

Whether because Bothwell had acted with an individual precipitancy which had interfered with their plot, or because they began to have fears for some other reason, the Lords, on the eve of the marriage, had insisted upon Bothwell obtaining from the Queen a document pardoning them and giving them immunity from responsibility for any consequences that might ensue as a result of their having signed the Ainslie’s supper band.

Mary and Bothwell remained at Holyrood for a week after the wedding. The records are unanimous in asserting that the Queen was miserably unhappy as Bothwell’s wife. His jealousy and grossness were extreme, so that even in the first days she was heard by one onlooker to call for a knife that she might kill herself. Outwardly she acted as though she esteemed him, determined to go through with the marriage which fate had thrust upon her, with an unflinching front to the world. On June 7th they set out, attended by 200 arquebusiers, for Borthwick Castle, the Queen having issued a proclamation commanding her vassals in the southern part of the country to meet her and Bothwell on a certain day at Melrose.

The inwardness of events now began to emerge. On

June 10th news reached Borthwick Castle that Morton and Lord Alexander Hume, with 1200 horsemen, were hastening to take Bothwell prisoner. Bothwell escaped to Haddington, and the Queen, disguised in man's clothes, went after him. They foregathered at Haddington, and rode together to Dunbar, reaching the Castle at three o'clock in the morning.

Their pursuers, disappointed of their prey, returned towards Edinburgh, and were joined on the way by Mar, Lindsay, Tullibardine, Lochleven and Grange, all Moray's henchmen. The Queen's adherents, Huntly, the Bishop of Ross, the Archbishop of St. Andrews, Lord Claude Hamilton and others, had closed the gates of the city, but, failing to rouse the citizens on the Queen's behalf, retired into Edinburgh Castle. The rebels forced the gates and entered the city. Du Croc, the French ambassador, at Mary's request, mediated, reminding the confederate Lords that Parliament had confirmed Bothwell's acquittal, and that they were signatories of the marriage band. The Lords asked for three days in which to answer. This mediation by Du Croc was suggested by the Queen because the Lords claimed to have risen in arms against her because "that by her ungodly and dishonourable proceeding in a private marriage with Bothwell, suddenly and impropositly, it is certain she was privy, art and part, of the murder of the King." On the face of it, the terms of the band being held in mind, this reason was remarkable. Yet the causes cited by the Lords in their endeavours to beat up recruits for their rebellion, were: the safety of the King's son; punishment for the King's murder, and the rescue of the Queen from Bothwell, who had imprisoned and raped her.

On June 15th the army led by Bothwell and the Queen faced the rebel army at Carberry Hill. Bothwell offered to settle the business by single combat, a proposal which came to nothing. Parleys occurred between the Queen and du Croc, without tangible results. The Queen, who wished to avoid battle and bloodshed, sent for Kirkcaldy of Grange, as being a man with some pretensions to honour. The day passed in his trips to and

from the Lords, and, in the end, against Bothwell's entreaties, the Queen agreed to accept the Lords' offer to honour and serve her if she would put away Bothwell, and passed over to their ranks. Reaching the rebel lines, she was greeted with cries of "Burn the whore," and conducted with all possible indignity to Edinburgh where she was lodged in the Provost's house. Next day, on the pretext that the Lords had intercepted a letter which she had written to Bothwell and which proved her insincere in her promise to give him up, she was taken to Lochleven Castle and imprisoned.

Such was the swift course of events in one of the most puzzling episodes of history. The reason for terminating it at this point in this narrative is that, when the Queen was imprisoned the Lords had no evidence of her alleged complicity in the Darnley murder, and the Queen was unaware of the reasons for the Lords' sudden change of front. The history of the past seven months, in the Queen's knowledge, was that the Lords had offered to find a means of ridding her of Darnley and that she had refused to countenance their projects to that end ; that Darnley had been murdered and she had narrowly escaped sharing his fate ; that Lennox had accused Bothwell of the crime, and that Bothwell had been found not guilty by the Lords and judges ; that his acquittal had, she believed, been ratified by Parliament, and reaffirmed by the Lords who had signed the marriage-band, and that they had offered to defend her marriage with him with their lives and fortune ; and yet, immediately the marriage was a fact, these same signatories had risen in arms against her. They had promised to honour and serve her if she put away Bothwell and surrendered to them ; and they had imprisoned her.

§2

It has been suggested that these mystifying happenings were the direct outcome of a plot devised by the Earl of Moray in concert with his most powerful and reliable ally, Morton. The latter had returned from exile early in January, and had been invited by Bothwell and Lethington

to sign the Darnley murder-band and to participate in the murder. Bothwell assured Morton that it was the Queen's wish. Morton warily insisted upon seeing evidence of this in the Queen's handwriting, whereupon George Douglas affected to go to Court with Bothwell to secure from the Queen her written assurance. A messenger was returned with the ambiguous message : " Tell the Earl of Morton that the Queen will hear no speech of the matter appointed unto him." This proves either that the Queen refused altogether to discuss again the question she had dismissed at Craigmillar, or that Bothwell had been bluffing to Morton, and invented this answer to save his face. Moray had been party to the Craigmillar discussions, although he had not signed the band ; and, as has been shown, he was eager for the return of Morton. It is honestly presumable that he had discussed the existing situation in all its bearings with the returned exile, and that Morton's unexpected refusal to join with Bothwell, Huntly, Argyll, Lethington, and Sir James Balfour as a subscriber to the band was a result of the conferences that he and Moray had had. They realised Bothwell's tendency to overreach himself, and, refraining from warning either the King or the Queen as to what was threatening, trusted to Bothwell's impatience to override discretion. That Morton's innocence in the matter was only apparent is proved by the cold fact that he died on the scaffold after trial for having been art and part in the murder of Darnley. He was, in common with all the powerful Lords, party to Bothwell's acquittal, and was one of the signatories of the marriage-band.

It is not known whether the suggestion for the marriage came from Bothwell or from Moray ; but that it was encouraged treacherously by the whole of Moray's party is proved by the bond. Such unanimity could only have been attained because the whole scheme was known, and because the signatories had been assured that their action in subscribing tended to assist in the re-establishment of the Protestant ascendancy. By their subsequent actions the signatories demonstrated that, despite the sacred terms in which their undertaking was framed, they were

not serious in swearing to Bothwell's innocence and to his fitness to be the Queen's husband. The marriage-bond had been put into Bothwell's hands for his own destruction, by the far-seeing Earl of Moray ; and Morton, Lethington, and the rest of the bonded Lords were privy to the underlying intention.

Moray and his confederates knew that Bothwell had actually committed the murder, in accordance with the Craigmillar band. The Queen did not know. It had been impossible for them to bring him in guilty of the crime at his trial, because he could have implicated most of them as actual accomplices, and could have proved Morton himself to have been fully cognisant that it was intended. The lesser nobles and the public generally were as certain about Bothwell's guilt, though without absolute knowledge to back their conviction. Moray and Morton had both suffered banishment for unsuccessfully challenging the Queen, and both were as anxious for her deposition now that she was free from Darnley—who had, ironically, been accomplice of the one and *casus bellum* of the other—as they had been when she was burdened with him. Their insincerity was all along so manifest that there is a sense of indecency to truth in even considering or recording their pretended solicitude for Christ's true religion.

Their astute brains saw the course clearly. The Queen had exalted Bothwell to the chief place in her confidence, and he was overweening enough to believe that she would marry him. If he were overwhelmingly backed by the support of practically the whole nobility who should at the same time reassure her upon any doubts she might have of his innocence of the murder of Darnley, the Queen was almost certain to accept him as husband. If she were reluctant, then encourage him to abduct and ravish her. Once that had happened, there would be nothing more to do except to spread more widely and definitely the fact that Bothwell had murdered the King.

The horror at the Queen marrying her husband's murderer would suffice to cause her overthrow, and the insinuation that, having married him, she must have been his

accomplice in the crime, would ensure an antagonistic public outbreak.

Moray realised that he must take no personal or overt part in the rebellion that was to make him Regent. It must occur as a spontaneous rising of a scandalised and outraged country, with the unsaintly Morton as its leader, while Moray took a tour on the Continent of Europe. He must not even return until the Queen had been deposed and the young Prince crowned and needing a Regent of the blood-royal, now legitimised by the kindness of his sister. It should even be made publicly to appear that he was reluctant to accept the Regency, that only the pressure of his friends and the needs of his country should persuade him to fill his sister's place.

This reconstruction presupposes two facts which have always been the subject of insoluble controversy. The first is that the Queen was unaware that Bothwell was personally guilty of Darnley's murder; the second, that she was not Bothwell's lover and had had no relations with him until he forced her in Dunbar Castle. At this stage of the examination, the question as to the Queen's complicity in the murder is not relevant, as it was not suspected when she was taken a prisoner to Lochleven.

The Queen's ignorance of Bothwell's guilt can only be proved by negative means. There is no tittle of evidence that she ever hinted by spoken or written word to anyone her suspicion that she believed him to have been the murderer. She knew that an association of nobles had desired to rid her of Darnley, and, when the assassination occurred despite her request that the removal of her husband should be left to God, those who could have enlightened her dared not do so. They formed the most important part of her Privy Council, and her probable conclusion was that the deed had been a concerted one. The failure of any one of them to make any serious attempt to bring the guilty to justice confirmed this supposition. Mary knew that no one person could be safely condemned for a political crime of this character, and she had sufficient unwilling foreknowledge of the identity of the principals to realise that any action to that

end would be formal. When Lennox insisted on charging Bothwell instead of Lethington or Huntly or Argyll, or even Moray, it must have seemed to her that he was naturally selecting the man who had aroused his son's most intense jealousy and hatred.

The most conclusive argument in favour of Mary's ignorance is that she married Bothwell, even after he had raped her. It is true that any love she had had for Darnley had been reduced to contempt and pity by his action in the Riccio conspiracy and his subsequent activities; and that her grief for his death was consequently more moderate than some would have had her show. It does not, however, seem credible that her character was marred by the callousness that would enable her willingly to marry the man who had actually murdered him; still less does it seem credible that her admittedly keen intelligence should have become so eclipsed as to make her believe for a moment that anything but tragedy could result from her marrying her husband's known murderer within four months of the date on which he had made her a widow. Her deposition was—given the attitude of the confederate Lords—certain from the moment she married Bothwell. And, finally, even supposing the Queen did suspect Bothwell, the marriage-bond, bearing the signatures of those whom she knew to be his associates at the Craigmillar conference, was sufficiently precise in its exoneration of him to have convinced the most obstinate sceptic. It would not be entirely absurd to suppose that the Queen believed that the Lords meant precisely what they subscribed to in that document. Clearly, if the principal signatories had known, for a positive fact, that the Queen was aware of the truth about the murder, they could have hoped for no result from their insistence upon what they knew that she knew was a lie.

§3

The question as to whether the allegations of Buchanan about Bothwell having possessed the Queen in the Exchequer House, and the innuendo in the *Book of Articles*

as to the lasciviousness practised at Drymmen and Tullibardine, represent the truth regarding Mary's relations with him is one that seems capable of easy answering. If the lengths to which her accusers have been forced to go in order to prove that she was the abandoned victim of an uncontrollable passion are indicative of the paucity of evidence, their case must be weak indeed. Mr. T. F. Henderson, anxious somehow to give reasonableness to his trust in Buchanan's story, suggested that the premature birth at Lochleven of stillborn twins ten months after Mary was in the Exchequer House—while Darnley was still alive—is proof of the truth of the allegation of the author of the *Detection*. The two instances cited, and remarks to the effect that "Bothwell rules all," are all the written evidence one can find to substantiate the charge under consideration. The Riccio scandal revealed how minutely Elizabeth's emissaries watched the conduct of the Scottish Queen, yet there is not a hint expressed by Bedford or Throckmorton, who had succeeded Randolph, nor by any other foreign ambassador, that there was anything wrong in the relations between the Queen and her chief Minister.

Those who accept Buchanan's story, and all that is implied by it, have a theory that Bothwell and Mary staged the abduction and rape episode in collusion, so that Mary could allege that she was forced into the marriage through the dishonouring of her body.

The question naturally arises: Why did Mary wish or need it to appear that she had been forced into the marriage? Five days before the abduction occurred, Bothwell had been able to present to her the sworn statement of her united nobility that they thought him the best husband she could choose. The assumption of her accusers being that she did most enthusiastically choose him, what possible or impossible end could be served by insisting upon making it appear that she had been shamefully forced into a marriage that all her nobility had approved only five days before?

Some ingenious emotionalists in the accusers' camp hold that the pair were so anxious to gratify their passion

without further delay, without waiting for Bothwell's divorce, that they hit upon this melodramatic device to live openly in sin, instead of indulging their lust in the secrecy they could so easily arrange, as indeed these speculators allege they had been doing for many months.

If the marriage-band had never existed, or if time and events had given cause to cancel its intention, then it might have been possible for the Queen to have agreed to be raped in order to justify her marriage afterwards. The circumstances, however, were entirely otherwise. Far from needing to be forced, every influential noble in Scotland, the united Parliament, wanted the Queen married to the man they knew—though she did not—to be her husband's slayer. After six years, one rebellion and two political murders, the Lords were as far from effectively abolishing Catholicism as they had been when the Queen arrived; and the Earl of Moray was as far from the Regency and crown as ever. They were now determined to abandon all scruples of honour and chivalry to bring about the deposition or death of this elusive and successful Catholic Queen.

If the facts are examined without passion or prejudice, their true significance emerges. The Lords offered Bothwell to the Queen as husband determined that the marriage should serve their end, and that of their leader. Bothwell was to be loaded with the full blame of the King's murder, and the Queen was to be deposed, as having dishonoured herself by marrying her husband's assassin. The young Prince was to be crowned and Moray appointed Regent. That much is clear.

§4

Bothwell had twice been suggested as husband to the Queen, before the marriage-band existed, and she had refused to consider him. She must have taken the same course when Bothwell pleaded his suit, backed by the band. The plan he adopted to overcome her opposition was in harmony with his reckless temperament. Before the Lords should have time to cool in their support, or the

Queen make widely known her distaste for their suggestion, he simply abducted her, and possessed her against her will—either by force, or/and the use of an aphrodisiac, some such device being confessed to by him when he wrote of overcoming her by “sweet waters” and magic.

The confession in which Bothwell made this admission, and in which he also swore that the Queen knew nothing of the King’s murder, is declared by some to be unauthentic. It was, nevertheless, produced as evidence at Morton’s trial for complicity in the murder of the King in 1581, and a copy was received by Cecil from the King of Denmark. Those students who have accepted it as genuine have refrained from using it effectively, or perhaps have failed to appreciate the significance of Bothwell’s confession in the light of its bearing upon other contemporary statements.

The topic is assuredly unsavoury, but this seems to be an occasion when reticence can be honourably dispensed with. If the ravishing of the Queen had been effected simply by brute force, no one who understands the character of Mary Stuart could believe that she would have considered such an event as one that compelled her, for her honour, to marry the ravisher. The medical profession will admit that aphrodisiacs can be administered and taken without the knowledge of the victim, and that they cause a loss of control resulting from an unnatural stimulus, while the victim retains full consciousness and memory. Bothwell is known to have been interested in magic—and in those days a knowledge of the use of drugs was magic—and he was a notorious seducer of well-bred women. Melville tells us that, when Bothwell carried the Queen to Dunbar, he boasted that he would marry her “wha wald or wha wald not; yea, whither sche wald hirself or not.”

The surrender of the Queen to his importunity and force, while tormented by a powerful aphrodisiac, provides a reasonable explanation of her subsequent conduct and hasty marriage to him. Her yielding would appear to her as an inexcusable lapse from her standard of conduct, yet one of which she had been guilty of

her own free will. The possible physical consequences would have weighed heavily in her mind. Her concern was well founded. When she refused Throckmorton's advice, in Lochleven, to divorce Bothwell, she pleaded: "takynge herself to be seven weekes gon with chylde, by renouncynge Bodwell, she shoulde acknowledge herselfe to be with chylde of a bastarde, and to have forsayted her honoure."

Mary had a great respect for Bothwell as loyal adherent of her house, though she did not want him as a husband; the Lords wanted her to marry him; and the best way out of the inexplicable, bad business must have seemed the obvious one of marrying him. The Queen's reference to the episode, in her Instructions to the Bishop of Dunblane, whom she sent to France to explain her hasty marriage, is significant. After referring to his seizing her by force, and taking her to Dunbar, where, "albeit we found his doings rude, yet were his answer and words but gentle"; and to a promise to marry him "partly extortit," she says that Bothwell would not agree "to have the consummation of the marriage delayit; . . . bot as be a bravade in the begynning he had win the fyrst point, sa ceased be nevir till he persuasonis and importune sute, accumpaneit notwithstanding with force, he hes finalie drevin us to end the work begun at sic tyme and in sic forme as he thocht mycht best serve his turne." There is the Queen's admission that she was not entirely taken by force, and, equally significant, the fact that Bothwell's whole intention was from the first moment to make utterly sure that the Queen should be forced to yield to the marriage proposal which the Lords had supported with such miraculous unanimity.

The confederate Lords, writing on June 12th, said that during the Queen's imprisonment by Bothwell, "the said Erll seducit by *unlesum wayis* our said Soverane to an unhonest marriage with himself." As late as July 21st—three days before her abdication—they wrote: "Our Soverane Lady was led captive; and by feare, force, and, as by mony conjectures may be weill suspected, *other extraordinary and mair unlauchfull meanys*, compelled to

become bedfellow to another wyve's husband." Even Hay Fleming admits that "they intended probably to include withcraft," and names Lady Buccleugh as one who provided Bothwell, on occasion, with the means of magic.

The report that the Queen had been captured and ravished by Bothwell was accepted as true by her enemies and adherents, and it served the Lords' turn as nothing else could have done. The rebellion which was to have been against the Queen for marrying Bothwell, could still go on, but its published pretext should be the rescue of Mary from the man who had ravished her, and to punish him for the murder of the King—the crime of which they had solemnly found him not guilty.

They appreciated the difficulty that it was as easy to rescue the Queen before Bothwell actually married her, as to do so after they were wed. But they learnt that the Queen had, ravished or not, decided to marry the man they had so warmly recommended to her for husband. They contented themselves with making their preparations, and letting the marriage go forward without either assent or opposition. Their opposition became active immediately the honeymoon period was over, and within a month of the wedding Bothwell was a fugitive and Mary a prisoner. They had called up their supporters on the pretext of safeguarding the Prince, rescuing the Queen, and punishing Bothwell for Darnley's murder. In the course of the rebellion they altered their causes to one of objection to the Queen's marriage—which they had advised; and another that she was privy, art and part, of the murder of the King.

§5

The proposition that the Earl of Moray had safeguarded his interests before leaving Scotland, two days before Bothwell's trial, is proved by the action of Morton and the confederate Lords. Not only did they proceed with the enforced abdication of the Queen, and the crowning of the Prince as her successor, but they compelled Mary to sign a document appointing Moray as

Regent until her son was seventeen, and also one nominating Châtelhérault, Lennox, Argyll, Atholl, Morton, Glencairn and Mar to act as Regents until Moray's return, or in the case of his death, or to act with him if he were not disposed to carry the Regency on his shoulders unaided. It is incredible that the Lords should have carried through such a solemn and dangerous act as the Queen's deposition without the explicit approval of their leader. Morton must have had his instructions, and he has the credit of having carried them out with despatch and thoroughness. He did Moray's dirty work, and how dirty it was is revealed by the circumstances that were evoked to justify the treachery of the Lords in their treatment of the Queen after her surrender to their pledged undertaking at Carberry Hill.

Their emissary, Kirkcaldy of Grange, solemnly promised her at the conclusion of the protracted negotiations that, if she would put away Bothwell, they would disperse their men, and serve, recognise and honour her as their natural princess. On these terms the Queen went over to the Lords' camp, taking farewell of Bothwell on the field, and the Lords making no attempt to prevent his escape. Mary's ingenuous confidence in the decency in human nature once again betrayed her. The condition on her side being that she should put away the husband her enemies had so enthusiastically recommended, she fulfilled it on the spot, and went down Carberry Hill with Kirkcaldy to be served, recognised and honoured. The Lords fulfilled their conditions by allowing the troops to call her whore, and by treating her with all the indignity that could be heaped upon a prisoner. They served her as gaolers, recognised her by deposing her, and honoured her by defaming her throughout Europe by disseminating falsehood.

Their excuse for taking her from Edinburgh, by way of Holyrood, to Lochleven, and imprisoning her, was that they had intercepted a letter to Bothwell which she had written in the Provost's house, where they had lodged her, under strict guard, on arriving from Carberry Hill. In this letter she is alleged to have assured Bothwell that

she had only sent him away for his own safety, and that she would never forget or abandon him. That letter was valuable and important from the viewpoint of the Lords, since it was the tangible proof that the Queen had not fulfilled her condition, and the ground upon which they cancelled their undertaking to serve, recognise and honour her as their natural princess. Sir James Melville, a contemporary, states in his *Memoirs* that some suspected that this letter was invented. It must also have been destroyed, for there is no copy anywhere to be found in any record of any of the numerous writers upon the events of the period. The purport of its contents has been given, but not one quoted line of the actual letter survives. Further, when Moray, Morton and others were in England upon their mission to convince Elizabeth that they had been justified in the actions they had taken against the Queen, because of her guilty complicity with Bothwell in the murder of the King, no reference of any kind whatsoever was made to this letter, which, they had previously alleged, was their justification for imprisoning her in the first instance. There is reasonable ground to suspect that no such letter was ever written by the Queen, but that it was the first of several forgeries which her enemies employed to effect their purposes against her.

Having used the supposed letter to convince the lesser nobility and the preachers, who could be relied upon to inform the people, the Lords proceeded to do what would have been done earlier had Moray's anti-Darnley rebellion, or the Riccio conspiracy, been successful. The rumours that her marriage to Bothwell proved her an accomplice in Darnley's murder seem to have had effect upon a section of the people, and the preachers, led by Knox—who had returned from hiding on the reascendancy of his lay supporters—called loudly for the condign punishment on the Queen, Knox waxing prophetic and promising Scotland a great plague if she were not made to die the death—by burning as a husband-murderess, according to the laws of the period.

The question as to whether the Queen should be

executed remained an open one for weeks. Throckmorton told Lethington that his instructions from Elizabeth, who was strongly opposed to the violent course taken by the Lords, were that if the Lords determined anything to the deprivation of the Queen of her royal estate, she would make herself a "plain party against them, to the revenge of their sovereign for example to all posterity." Elizabeth was more concerned in this move for the safety of princes in general than with Mary's personal case. Lethington unhesitatingly informed the English ambassador that, if he said that to the Lords, all the world could not have saved Mary's life for three days. That was Moray's line, expressed in his absence by his spokesmen. At the first open threat to restore the Queen to power, she should be executed or assassinated.

It must be remembered that the only ground upon which the Lords claimed the right to resile from their promise to Mary at Carberry Hill was the alleged letter which they claimed to have intercepted. It is true that the Casket Letters—which will be dealt with in the next chapter—had been stolen by this time, but they were still in the casket when the Queen was imprisoned at Lochleven. Throckmorton was ignorant of their existence on July 27th, and Lethington made no reference to them when discussing the situation with him.

On July 24th the Lord Lindsay waited upon the Queen with three documents for signature, by one of which she admitted that she was so broken in health and spirits that she could no longer endure the toil of governing, and for this reason renounced the government to her son, and authorised his coronation; the other two dealt with Moray's appointment as Regent. Claude Nau's account of the brutal conduct of Lindsay on that occasion, asserting that by threats of death and something approaching personal violence the Queen's signature was extorted, is substantially corroborated by Lethington's assertion that later, when the Regent wished Lindsay to go with him to England to testify that Mary had demitted her crown willingly, he refused; and, when pressed to reconsider, "swore ane grit oathe, and said, my Lord, and ye

caus me to goe to England with you, I will spill the whole matter, for, and thei accuse me, of my conscience I cannot but confess the treuth." The Queen always maintained that her signatures on those documents were of no effect, as they were made under compulsion and threats when she was a prisoner. The Prince was crowned five days later, John Knox sharing in the triumph of Moray by being invited to preach the coronation sermon.

The Earl of Moray returned from his holiday a fortnight later, and, after spending four days in consultation with his executives, he went to Lochleven to interview the Queen. According to the account which Moray personally gave to Throckmorton, he began by scolding her for her misgovernment, expounding it in detail. His onslaught having reduced her to tears, he left her willing her to seek God's mercy as her chiefest refuge. The Queen sent for him next day, and after using some consoling words to her, he cautioned her that, while he had a desire to spend his own life in saving hers, he had not sole power as the Lords and others had an interest in the matter. He passed on to warn her against plotting in her own behalf, bade her acknowledge her faults to God with lamentations for her past sins, so that it might appear that she detested her former way of living, and intended better for the future. In gratitude for this smug oration, he asserts, she took him in her arms and kissed him, and begged him not to refuse the Regency. To his many declared reasons why he should refuse the honour, the Queen is alleged to have opposed her prayerful intercession that he should prefer her reasons to his own. "At length he accorded unto her the acceptance of the Regency." Whereupon, one imagines, the gods of irony gave him a round of applause.

The Queen's account of the conversation regarding the Regency is to a more credible effect. She said that Moray owned that he had already promised to accept the Regency, and could spare no more time excusing himself for doing so. Claude Nau goes further and states that the Queen begged him not to accept.

The day before he was proclaimed Regent, Moray placidly told Throckmorton that he approved the actions of the Lords, and that although it should cost him his life, he meant "to reduce all men to obedience in the King's name."

§6

The Laird of Lochleven proved himself a less careful gaoler than the Earl of Shrewsbury and Sir Amyas Poulet were to reveal themselves. After one unsuccessful attempt to escape in the disguise of a laundress, in which her fair, white hands betrayed her to the boatmen, the Queen escaped from Lochleven Castle on May 2nd, 1568, with the help of a young man, George Douglas, the son of her keeper, who had fallen happily a victim to her beauty and charm.

During her stay several new matrimonial projects were considered and abandoned, among the suitors being George Douglas, Lord Methven, the brother of Argyll, the Earl of Morton himself, and Lord John Hamilton, brother of the insane Earl of Arran. A less honourable proposal was made to the Queen by Lord Ruthven, one of her keepers, who entered her bedroom on one occasion and swore that he would effect her escape and work for her restoration if the Queen would "love him." For this insulting form of blackmail Ruthven was removed from his charge for a time. He was not the murderer of Riccio, but his successor.

The Queen had an early miscarriage of twins a few weeks after her arrival at Lochleven. This is a fact given by Claude Nau, her secretary, whose information was derived largely direct from his mistress, and disposes of the other two legends which have none the less survived in the calendar of Marian impossibilities. The less incredible of these was that the Queen bore a daughter in Lochleven, who afterwards was reared as a nun at Soissons. The other legend, which can only have been based on malicious and unintelligent gossip, was to the effect that while at Lochleven the Queen gave birth to a son by George Douglas. There is no record that she

was ill during the latter part of her stay, and she was physically fit enough to ride all day when she escaped : she was in Lochleven ten months. This tale is characteristic of the evidence upon which the charge against Mary Stewart, as being a flagrantly immoral woman, is based. It is unromantically enlightening for the student to discover how little evidence of a reliable kind survives to prove her anything other than a woman normally careful of her chastity.

The group of nobles who rallied round her, on her escape, were headed by the Hamiltons, who saw in her plight a chance to restore the fortunes of their house, by marrying her to Lord John, and defeating and disgracing the Stewart Earl of Moray. They were close claimants to the Scottish crown, and it would not have been past them, had their design been successful, to remove the young Prince in a similar way to that adopted by the Confederate Lords in removing his father.

Eleven days after the escape, the Queen's forces were utterly defeated at the battle of Langside, her commander-in-chief having swooned from the weight of his responsibilities when the fighting began. After three days of such riding and hardship as made the famous Jedburgh ride appear as mere riding exercise, Mary crossed the Solway in the expectation that Elizabeth would honour her many recent promises to help her against her rebels.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE CASKET CANARD

§ I

THE Queen's escape to England placed Moray in a dilemma. Elizabeth had been strongly opposed to the violent course which he and his adherents had pursued in their treatment of Mary, and, although he knew that the fulfilment of his own ambition had, in fact, served the English Queen's purposes, he was faced with the necessity of justifying the actions he had taken and approved to attain his ends. He did not doubt but that Elizabeth was well content to have in her hands the Catholic heir-apparent to the English throne, but it became clear that both he and she must make some show of justification for imprisoning Mary. He must satisfy Elizabeth on his side, that he had had good grounds for imprisoning and deposing her; and Elizabeth, on her side, must have an adequate pretence to retain her in her hands, and to absolve her from her written promises to do all she could to restore Mary to her princely estate.

The revelation of the procedure which he successfully adopted entails, by its nature, an interruption of the exact chronological narrative of the life of Mary Stewart. John Knox's part in the chase is over: he has served his turn in helping to corner the quarry. The caging and despatch of the victim is now entirely in the hands of the remaining members of the relentless triumvirate.

The day before the Queen surrendered at Carberry Hill, Maitland of Lethington, who had kept at Dunbar until nine days before, had an interview of some hours' duration with Sir James Balfour, in Edinburgh Castle. They were both signatories of the Darnley murder-band,

on which Bothwell had acted for them, and Lethington realised the extreme danger of allowing the band to remain in existence, in the event of Bothwell crushing the rebellion and so gaining the ascendancy. The upshot of the interview is recounted by Randolph. The conspirators searched for the incriminating band, and found it in a box. "This bond was kept in the Castle," writes Randolph, "in a little box covered with green cloth, and, after the apprehension of the Queen at Carberry Hill, was taken out of the place where it lay by the laird of Lethington, in presence of Mr. James Balfour, the clerk of the register and the keeper of the keys where the registers are."

When the Queen was parting from Bothwell on the hill, he told her who were his accomplices in the murder-band, and when she talked with Lethington, in the Provost's house in Edinburgh, the day after her capture, she, according to Nau, told him that Bothwell had told her that he (Lethington), Morton, and Balfour were the true culprits, and that they had prevented inquiry into the King's murder. She also told him plainly that Bothwell had given her the names of all the signatories to the murder-bond when he was preparing to flee at Carberry Hill. Lethington, thoroughly alarmed at her knowledge, is reported to have answered that, if she pursued this course with him, the Queen would drive him to extremities to save his own life. The following words occur in a letter, written by Randolph to Kirkcaldy of Grange and Lethington, jointly: "You, Lord of Lethington, by your persuasion and counsel to apprehend her, to imprison her, yea, to have taken presently the life from her . . ." There are other reports, at the time, that Lethington was in favour of the Queen's execution or assassination. From his viewpoint, it was a case of her life or his.

Lethington, having spent some hours with the Governor of Edinburgh Castle on June 14th, when their attention had been concentrated on a search among records and documents, dined with Morton on June 19th, two days after the Queen had been taken to Lochleven. While they were at dinner "a certain man" came and informed

Morton that some of Bothwell's servants had been seen entering the Castle. Morton at once sent some of his men to apprehend them as they should leave the Castle, and, although they arrived too late, one of the Bothwell men, named George Dalgleish, was seized next day. After being tortured, he confessed to having taken from the Castle a small silver casket containing some papers belonging to Bothwell. The casket was secured and remained in Morton's custody all night. Next day, before Atholl, Mar, Glencairn, Morton, Hume, Sempill, Sanghuar, the Master of Graham, Lethington, Tullibardine, and Archibald Douglas, the casket was broken open, and the contents "sichtit" by those present.

The contents are alleged to have been eight letters and some sonnets, written in French, by Mary to Bothwell; and a promise of marriage to him signed by the Queen. The last-named document probably never existed except as a forgery to be shown privately during the Conference of York. It was not produced with the other items at the subsequent conferences.

The story of the capture of Dalgleish, the seizure and opening of the casket, and the facts regarding its contents, rests entirely upon the word of Morton, the leader of the Queen's rebels and enemies in the absence of Moray.

On June 26th the man Dalgleish was examined before Morton, Atholl and Grange, sitting as Lords of the Secret Council. A copy of the proceedings and his deposition, attested by Sir John Bellenden, Justice Clerk, survives, from which it is discovered that not a single question was put to him, nor any reference made, concerning the seizing of the casket, of the existence of the casket, or its contents. There is no evidence whatsoever in Dalgleish's deposition to support Morton's story of the famous casket.

§2

The first use that was made of the letters by the Regent, Moray, and the Lords, was to embody a reference to them in an Act of the Secret Council, dated December 4th, 1567, which set forth "that the cause and occasion of the

private conventions of the Lords, Barons, and others, and consequently their taking of arms and coming to the field with displayed banners; and the cause and occasion of the taking of the Queen's person on the XV of June last—was in the said Queen's own default, in so far as, by diverse her Privy Letters, written and subscribed with her own hand, and sent her to James, Earl of Bothwell, chief executor of the horrible murder—and by her ungodly proceeding in a private marriage with him, suddenly thereafter, it is most certain that she was privy, art and part, of the actual device of the murder of the King."

Eleven days later an Act of Parliament, of similar intent, entitled "Act of Concerning the Queen's Detention," refers to the letters, not as subscribed, or signed, by the Queen, but as "wholly written with her own hand."

It is to be remarked that the evidence upon which the Lords base their justification for taking the Queen's person, on June 15th, was unknown to anyone until June 21st. The fact now also becomes apparent that the letters were *neither signed nor addressed*.

Queen Mary arrived in England on May 16th, 1568. Moray sent a messenger, John Wood, to Elizabeth with *Scots translations* of the original French letters alleged to have been found in the casket. Wood's mission was to show these translations to the English Queen and to learn from her whether, in the event of the originals being found to tally with the Scots translations, she would regard them as evidence of Mary's guilt in the murder of Darnley.

No explanation was given at the time, and none satisfactory has since been advanced, as to why copies of the French originals were not sent, and why Scots translations were used instead. This substitution of the inexact for the exact is the more mysterious when one realises that French was a language better understood than Scots in the English Court; and that later, for the greater convenience of the English council, English translations of the Scots translations were made. Linguistic complexity was intensified by Latin translations—of either French,

Scots, or English versions—made by Buchanan at the time of the York Conference.

§3

The despatch of John Wood with copies, in translation, of these letters which had been in the Lords' hands for eleven months, according to Morton's story, revealed the line of offence and defence that Moray had decided upon. It was agreed that commissioners, appointed respectively by Elizabeth, Mary, and the Confederate Lords, should meet at York and inquire into the whole of Mary's deposition and imprisonment. The leading commissioners were: for Elizabeth, the Duke of Norfolk, the Earl of Sussex, and Sir Ralph Sadler; for Queen Mary: Leslie, Bishop of Ross, Lords Livingston, Boyd, and Herries; and for the Lords: Moray, Morton, Lethington, and Buchanan.

It will be remembered at this point that Lindsay was asked by Moray to attend for the purpose of proving the Queen's abdication to have been signed willingly, and that he had refused, because his conscience would have forced him to spill the whole truth of that matter.

Moray was to submit to the Conference a case that should prove misgovernment by the Queen, and that she had willingly abdicated and demitted her crown to the Prince. Elizabeth wrote to Mary offering to act as umpire, and informed her that, when Moray submitted a charge of political misgovernment, she would decide that he had failed to substantiate his case, and guarantee her restoration, by force if necessary. She also asserted that no charge affecting Mary's personal honour would be admitted. In return for these good offices—friendly to Mary but treacherous to justice—Mary was to renounce her title to the crown of England; substitute a league with England for the league with France; and abandon the Mass and receive the Common Prayer after the manner of England.

To Moray, Elizabeth wrote that any evidence showing Mary to have been an accomplice of Bothwell in the murder of Darnley would be received and committed.

She knew, through the visit of John Wood, of the existence of the Casket Letters, and, while these were irrelevant to the inquiry as understood by Mary, they were made to form the whole subject of it, as soon as the Conference adjourned to Hampton Court.

The commissioners met first in York in October, 1568. On the 11th of October Elizabeth's commissioners wrote to her that the letters and other evidences against Mary were produced and shown to them by Lethington, Buchanan, and Macgill "privately, and in a secret conference; not as commissioners, as they protested, but for their (the English commissioners) better instruction; after declaration of such circumstances as led and induced to vehement presumption to judge the Queen guilty of the King's murder."

Mary anticipated what might happen and had given her commissioners definite instructions that if any writings of hers were produced, she must have personal inspection of the originals, and "make answer thereto." She added that such writings would be "forged and invented by themselves . . . and thair ar divers in Scotlande, baith men and women, that can counterfeit my handwriting . . . an principallie sic as ar in cumpanie with theme-selfis." Crawford's *Memoirs* states: "It was notoriously known that Lethington had often counterfeited the Queen's hand."

The Casket Letters were not produced openly at York, the Conference being adjourned to Hampton Court almost as soon as the Queen's answer to Moray's charge revealed the fact that "under confinement, and threatened with death, they (the Lords) did extort from her a resignation of the Government; and other writings, which by force she was compelled to sign." The transference of the Conference from York was the signal for Elizabeth to begin to practise her treacherous promise-breaking. Having promised Mary that she would not admit her accusers to her presence, she admitted them; and, having undertaken that nothing affecting Mary's personal honour should be admitted, she demanded of Moray and his companions "why they do forbear to charge the

Queen with the guiltiness of the murder of her husband, considering their party have always given it out to the world that she is guilty." Having, also, upon conditions, guaranteed to restore Mary to her throne, Elizabeth now informs her accusers that if they will show sufficient matter to prove her guilty, she will never restore her to her throne. Be it recalled that John Wood had already shown Elizabeth the Scots translations of the incriminating documents.

Moray abandoned the charge of misgovernment solemnly made at York, as his main line of attack, and gave in a new charge, on November 26th, publicly accusing Mary of being in the foreknowledge of, and participant with, Bothwell in the murder of her husband. On December 3rd Mary demanded to be permitted to appear in person to declare her innocence, and accuse her accusers of the crime they charged her with, in the presence of Elizabeth, her nobility, and all the foreign ambassadors. Elizabeth answered that she "thought it very reasonable that she should be heard in her own cause, being so very weighty," but expressed uncertainty as to before whom, when, and where. After consulting with Moray and the rest, and learning that they were averse from confronting the Queen and neutral judges, she refused to allow Mary's request. Mary's commissioners protested "that no further should be proceeded in this Conference."

In the absence of Mary's commissioners, Moray and Morton produced the casket with its contents, and also a copy of the proceedings at Bothwell's trial, with the examinations and confessions of Hay of Tala, Hepburn, Powrie, and Dalgleish, all of whom, as Bothwell's men, had been executed for the King's murder, and all of whom had not only refrained from charging the Queen with complicity in it, but had publicly declared her innocent of connection with it. The confession of Hepburn, which truthfully implicated Lethington in the murder, was deliberately garbled. The Lethington reference was omitted, and yet Moray swore on oath that the document was a verbatim report of Hepburn's confession. Hepburn being dead, he was safe from detection.

The handwriting was compared with other of Mary's writings and found to resemble it, copies were taken and collated, and the originals immediately redelivered to Moray.

Mary instructed her commissioners to ask for the inspection of, and copies of, all they had produced against her; and that she might see the alleged original writings; stating definitely that, with these in her possession, she could give such an answer as would prove her innocence, and the guilt of her accusers. "Quhilk desire her Majesty (Elizabeth) thocht very reasonabill," and asked for an extract of Mary's answer to the accusation, which Mary's commissioners delivered to her next morning. No copies or originals being forthcoming, the commissioners again on January 7th asked for them, and received the strange answer that the best thing for Mary to do was to "yield up her crown and demit the same to the Prince"—which she had been forced to do eighteen months before—"and remain in this realm of England privately."

On January 12th, Moray, Morton, and the other Lords Commissioners, were given their licence from Elizabeth to depart to Scotland, having first appeared before her Privy Council to hear Cecil make the following speech :

"For so much as there has been nothing deduced against them as yet, that may impair their honour or allegiances; or on the other part, there had been nothing sufficiently produced, nor shown by them against the Queen their Sovereign, whereby the Queen of England should conceive or take an evil opinion of the Queen her good sister for any thing yet seen; and there being alleged by the Earl of Moray the unquiet state and disorder of the realm of Scotland now in his absence, her Majesty thinketh meet not to restrain his liberty . . . but suffers him to depart . . ."

This almost handsome exculpation of Mary would seem conclusive, uttered by anyone but Elizabeth. It was the only statement that she made regarding the authenticity of the letters, and for this reason, combined with the fact



SIR WILLIAM MAITLAND OF LETHINGTON

that it is in Mary's favour, it is significant and important. One conclusion that can be reasonably arrived at is that, taken in conjunction with her persistent and repeated refusal to let Mary or her commissioners see either the originals or the copies of the letters and other documents upon which Moray's charge was based, this assertion that she could form no evil opinion of Mary suggests that she was convinced that the letters alleged to have been found in the casket were forgeries. If the long Glasgow letter¹ had been genuine, there could have been no reason to refuse to send Mary a copy of it. The complicity of the writer in the murder of Darnley is as clearly revealed as it would have been by a definite confession. Mary would never have established her innocence if she had written that letter; and Elizabeth, believing the letter to be genuine, would never have authorised Cecil to make the above speech of dismissal to Moray in her name.

§4

The authenticity of the Casket Letters, and, more particularly, the incriminating Glasgow letter, has been the subject of almost unexampled controversy. Such historians as Hume and Froude have accepted them as genuine, while a stack of volumes have been written to prove them forgeries, since they were used as the sole evidence for the defamation of the Scottish Queen. Whittaker, Goodall, Tytler, and Hosack all spent years sifting evidence, and each succeeded in establishing a plausible case against authenticity and in favour of the contention that they were forged. Skelton followed with an attempt at vindication, but his partiality defeated him.

The most important of recent researchers, whose labours in unearthing and applying evidence not known to their forerunners, have discounted the brilliant advocates of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, are T. F. Henderson and Andrew Lang, who enjoyed a private duel of their own, in which the honours went to Henderson. Lang, one of Mary's affectionate champions, after writing a long book and proving that the Glasgow letter

¹ See Appendix B.

must have been forged, either entirely or in interpolations, finally convinced himself, with unfeigned reluctance, that it is not possible on the now known evidence to doubt the genuineness of the letter, or perhaps it would be more exact to say that he was now convinced that the letter could not have been forged.

Anyone must approach such a hammered-out subject with humility, if not with trepidation. There must appear something vain in any writer venturing to propose that he can add something to what has already been said, while admitting that he has only the same material in the way of facts and documents as was available to the brilliant genius of Andrew Lang, on which to base his conclusions. There are, nevertheless, certain conclusions to be arrived at after impartial examination of some of the facts, which have not been put forward by any of the controversialists, and, as one of them bears directly upon the principal issue of the Lang-Henderson difference, they shall be set down.

The first point, the significance of which has not been appreciated, is the fact that the copies of the Casket Letters which were sent to England by John Wood, nearly a year after their discovery, were in a Scots translation and not in the original French. This fact by itself would not be of undue importance, but it becomes vitally significant associated with the instructions given to their bearer. He was to ask Elizabeth "if the French originals are found to tally with the Scots translations, will that be reckoned good evidence?" What intelligible reason could there be in going to the trouble and expense of sending a gentleman messenger from Edinburgh to London with such a message, when he could more easily have been given collated copies of the French originals to present to the judgment of Elizabeth?

Wood was despatched on this mission within a very few days of Mary's arrival in England, almost as soon as Moray had appreciated the need to give Elizabeth more evidence than he had yet been able to give her, in justification of his handling of the Queen. Lethington knew that Mary was fully informed about the murder-band, and he

must have discussed with Moray the danger to them all that would result if she were allowed to meet Elizabeth, and tell her all she knew. There was not only the murder-band, but the Bothwell marriage-band, which would over-set their charge that the Queen had married him without their consent, and knowing him to be the murderer of her husband. If Elizabeth learnt from Mary that they, the Lords, were all more or less implicated in the design to murder Darnley, and that, less than a month before she married Bothwell, they had all affirmed Bothwell's innocence and sworn to support that marriage with their lives and fortunes, they would be faced by almost insuperable difficulties in confuting these true allegations.

Lethington's mind was of the type to conceive the plan that it is suggested was adopted. Assume that letters of some kind from Mary to Bothwell were contained in the casket, including one from Glasgow reporting to him —her principal adviser, let it be marked—the state of health and mind in which she found Darnley. It must be remembered that the King, before being taken ill, had been boasting that he would seize the Prince and govern in his name, and also that he had not relinquished his project to leave the country by sea—probably intending to go to France or Spain for help for his design.

The only way of escape for Lethington and his fellow-conspirators was to make the Queen share their guilt in the eyes of Elizabeth, to whom she had fled for promised succour. What could be simpler than for Lethington to obtain the casket, and amplify a Scots translation of the Glasgow letter by adding the incriminating passages? To satisfy themselves that his additions were sufficiently damning, John Wood was sent off to discover Elizabeth's opinion; on his return would be time enough to settle down to the business of forging a French version of the garbled document. Once the idea was conceived of giving concrete form to the rumours they had long been spreading about the Queen's complicity in the murder, the tampering with the letter or letters was an obvious and easy course for Lethington who, it was notoriously known, had often counterfeited the Queen's hand.

The accidental shortage of paper which caused the Queen when writing the letter to use a sheet on which she had written some memoranda, which has proved such an obstacle to those who have tried to prove forgery, was, of course, of inestimable value to the forger in the way of verisimilitude. He could use the device, and add to the memoranda to suit the purpose of his additions ; at the same time producing a document that bore the most artless and apparent proofs of an authenticity that would normally defeat the invention of the most astute forger. The memoranda referred to can be seen in the letter printed in an appendix, a glance at which will make clear the importance of this point.

It is possible that this course had already been determined upon to meet such an emergency as had arisen. The garbled letter had probably already been forged in French, and the Scots translation was sent in order that, if Elizabeth were unconvinced by it, the forgery could be replaced by another forgery, in which the passage dealing with the Queen's complicity could be emphasised in such a manner as not seriously to compromise the reasonable correctness of the translation already shown to Elizabeth. In view of Lethington's retort to Mary, after Carberry Hill, that she would drive him to desperate courses to save his own life, his perturbation might easily have suggested this course immediately he read the probable original Glasgow letter—the real existence of which has been suggested here—less than a week after that talk.

Until some more convincing explanation of the strange course of sending Elizabeth a Scots translation with so strange a request is forthcoming, this hypothesis may stand. It must be kept in mind that no one was allowed to see the originals of the letters found in the casket, from the day they were "sichtit" by the Lords in Morton's house, until they were produced before the English Privy Council in London ; and that they were never seen by anyone from that day. In Parliament, on December 15th, 1567, when the letters were mentioned in an Act, if they were produced at all, they would only have been read out—and then probably in Scots. If they were read in the

original French, few of the Lords would have understood them. They had, at that time, been in the possession of Morton, or the Lords, for six months.

§5

The second main argument that is offered as amplifying this already exhaustive subject is one dealing with the verbal similarities between the Glasgow letter and what is known as Crawford's Deposition.¹

This deposition was put in as part of the evidence against the Queen on December 8th, 1568, when the commissioners were sitting at London, and its particular purpose was to substantiate the authenticity of the Glasgow letter. When, on January 21st, 1567, Mary visited her sick husband at Glasgow, this man, Captain Thomas Crawford, met the Queen, on behalf of his master, the Earl of Lennox, four miles from the city, to offer her Lennox's apologies for not coming himself to greet her. Further, he was instructed by Lennox, who was also ill in bed, to get from Darnley a report of his conversations with the Queen, write it out and give it to his master, in order that he might be kept fully informed, despite his incapacity to visit his son. Crawford, it is to be assumed, duly received from Darnley an account of the conversation which occurred on the Queen's first visit to him, after her arrival; wrote it out as it fell from his lips and passed it on to Lennox. While Crawford was so occupied, the Queen may be assumed to have been writing her account of the same conversation to Bothwell, he being naturally anxious to hear how the interview had come out. The reader is invited now to turn to the two appendices, quoting the letter and the deposition, and to compare the passages which have been printed in italics.

The similarity of the phrasing is so close as to be uncanny, and it can be laid down as almost impossible that two persons writing separately their recollections of a conversation could have recalled words and phrases with such mutual exactitude. Each could certainly have reported upon each subject that had been dealt with, but

¹ See Appendix A.

that their memory of the words should have been so precise is incredible.

This amazing similarity between parts of the letter and the deposition was, of course, detected at once by critics on both sides of the controversy, and Andrew Lang in his penultimate decision that forgery in part, if not in whole, was demonstrable, proved that the deposition was genuine, and that the forged Glasgow letter was based upon it. In the end he abandoned this view, and largely because he argued himself to the conclusion that both were genuine, independent documents. The argument he used to convince himself of this was that whereas Mary had written, "I asked why he (Darnley) would pass away in an English ship. He denies it, and swears thereunto; but he grants that he spoke unto the men;" Crawford wrote, "She asked him why he would pass away in the English ship. He answered that he had spoken with the Englishman, but not of mind to go away with him. And if he had, it had not been without cause, considering how he was used. For he had neither (means) to sustain himself nor his servants, and need not make further rehearsal thereof, seeing she knew it as well as he." Later in her letter Mary writes: "He hath spoken at the fyrist more stoutly, as this bearer shall tell you upon the matter of the Englishmen and of his departure; but in the end cometh to his gentleness agayne."

This Lang regards as "proof positive" that Crawford did not copy the Glasgow letter; and goes on to allude to the memoranda as a difficulty that no forgery-argument can surmount. It seems, surely, proof positive of nothing more than that Crawford did not slavishly follow the letter.

T. F. Henderson, dealing with this point before Lang retracted his belief that the letter was a forgery, cheerfully admitted his own belief that Crawford must have refreshed his memory by reading the letter, when called upon by his master, Lennox, to supply his deposition for use in so weighty a cause. The probability that the letter was based upon the deposition can be dismissed as no longer tenable: Lang and Henderson have between them

proved this. This leaves Lang holding that the deposition was not copied from the letter, and Henderson admitting that it probably was copied from it.

The view of the present writer is the same as Henderson's. Crawford was allowed to see a copy of the forged letter, which was based upon an original which, with incriminating additions and interpolations, had been forged verbatim. The reading of the letter did refresh Crawford's memory and when he came to the point about the Englishman, he did honestly recollect what Darnley had said in addition to what Mary had reported him to have said on that subject. Mary does, after all, when recalling the matter in the later part of her letter, refer to Darnley speaking "more stoutly," and Crawford simply recorded his recollection of what the stout words were. He followed the letter slavishly enough, in all conscience, but he was naturally anxious not to appear to have done so; therefore he made one reference to one speech of Darnley's, where Mary had made two detached statements of it.

It has never been contended by any critic that Crawford's deposition was a copy of the paper he gave to Lennox the night on which he wrote it in Glasgow. His preamble—"These are the words I remember were betwixt the King and the Q. in Glascow when she took him away to Edinbr."—proves that it was not.

Therefore unless Crawford's memory was as exact as a dictaphone, and unless also Darnley's report to him was identical with Mary's report to Bothwell, his deposition was based upon the letter which the Lords had no hesitation in letting him see, because the parts with which he was concerned were a verbatim forgery of a letter that Mary did actually write.

It is curious, also, to notice that Crawford reports no talk of any moment which is not also alluded to by Mary, yet she was writing only on those points in her talk with Darnley which would be of interest to Bothwell, yet he does omit one or two minor points which Mary mentions. His deposition frankly smacks of a specially composed piece of evidence calculated to make it seem that

Mary's relations with Darnley were very unsatisfactory, as a preliminary to her alleged complicity in the murder.

§6

Another point, seemingly significant, which has been overlooked by earlier writers on this much-contested subject, is the failure of the Lords to use the Glasgow letter when Mary escaped from Lochleven. If their stated reasons for imprisoning and deposing her were honest, the obvious thing to do, when Mary's unsuspecting adherents flocked to her banners, was to publish this proof-positive that she had conspired with Bothwell for the King's death. Her own Proclamation was calculated to provoke and excuse the most violent and unsparing retort. In it she described Moray as "ane spurious bastard promovit fra ane religious monk to Erle and Lord," as "that beistlie traitour," "that bastard traitour." Moray and his adherents are charged themselves with murdering Darnley, and inciting Bothwell to ravish her; and the Lords are roundly named "dispairit bludie tyrantis." Lethington is "the mischent unworthie traitour"; James Balfour "the ingrait traitour"; Craigmillar, "the cowart traitour," and the Riccio murderers as "hell houndis, bludy tyrantis, common mutheraris and throt cutteris."

Although there is no proof that this Proclamation was issued, a copy has survived to reveal the buttons-off-the-foils mood that the Queen was in. The Lords were alarmed at the numbers that flocked to Mary's support, yet it is apparent that the publication by Proclamation of the Glasgow letter would have had an instantaneous damping effect upon the enthusiasm with which the Queen's escape was greeted by a great part of her subjects. The rumours which had been spread were adequate to stir the soldiery to cries of "Burn the whore!" but they had no deep effect upon the people who had confidence in the Queen. Lords Sanquhar and Tullibardine, who had been at the ceremony at Morton's house when the casket was broken open and its contents exhibited, were

signatories to a bond for delivering Mary from Lochleven, which would suggest that they had formed no bad opinion of her as a result of reading whatever the casket then contained. This bond was signed by twenty-seven Lords, nine bishops, and the most powerful of the barons.

The fact, therefore, remains that the Lords did not use the most powerful weapon that they possessed against the Queen when she was making her last desperate bid against her Protestant enemies ; and this despite the fact that she was herself charging them with the murder, and that the Glasgow letter was sufficient to clear them of the charge and fix it on her.

This omission, considered in conjunction with John Woods's mission and queer instructions, goes some way to establish the contention that the Glasgow letter, as finally produced, had not at that time been put into approved form ; and that the Lords did not feel themselves in sufficiently desperate straits to use the forgery until the Queen's escape to England and the implicit danger of Elizabeth receiving from her the truth at first-hand.

A few other relevant points may be given which tend to support the theory that the Glasgow letter was a document written entirely by the forger, and incorporating the whole of an actual letter written by Mary to Bothwell which contained no incriminating sentences.

1. The original letters were never seen by anyone but the Lords and Elizabeth's Commissioners and Council, and they have never been seen by anyone since they were redelivered to Moray across the Conference table.

2. Although copies of the majority of the original French letters exist in more than one collection of manuscripts, no copy of the original French of the Glasgow letter has ever been discovered. Nothing but translations have ever been published.

3. Kirkcaldy of Grange, known as "the flower of chivalry," deserted the Lords and went over to the Queen as soon as he learnt that the casket writings were to be used by the Lords against her.

4. The confessions of all the retainers of Bothwell who

were executed for their part in the King's murder explicitly exonerate the Queen from any connection with or knowledge of the murder. Nicholas Hubert (French Paris) who is alleged to have carried the letter, "at the time of his execution, took it upon his death, as he should answer to God, that he never carried any such letter, nor that the Queen was participant, nor of council in the case."

5. The translation of the letter contains two phrases which could be cited by the forger, if challenged, to explain why the writing might not be exactly characteristic. They are: "Excuse my evil writing . . ." and "Excuse it if I write yll . . . bot I cannot mend it . . ."

6. The fact that, at the end of the Conference in London, Cecil stated that nothing had been produced "whereby the Queen of England should conceive or take any evil opinion of the Queen her good sister for anything yet seen," proves that Elizabeth and her Council, after examination of the Casket Letters, were convinced that they were not genuine.

7. There is no other document in Mary's hand, or in any other hand, that throws the least shadow of doubt upon Mary's innocence of complicity in, or foreknowledge of, the murder of Darnley.

8. That whenever—as in the case of Morton's request for a written assurance that she wished him to commit the murder—the Queen was approached by anyone to consent to any action being taken to rid her of Darnley, she resolutely refused to agree or approve.

9. Contemporary testimony proves that the Queen was ignorant of the murder-band, until Bothwell made his disclosures to her before riding away at Carberry Hill.

10. Bothwell, in his declaration to the King of Denmark, stated on oath that the Queen was altogether innocent and knew nothing of the murder. According to Sinclair's MS. *History of Scotland*, which was written at the time, Bothwell swore to this effect "at his death, and several times before."

The Casket Letters are the strongest-scented red-herring that has ever been dragged across the fields of

history, and it seems doubtful whether its trail is not likely to prove immortal. Darnley's murder was as clearly the joint achievement of a band of nobles as was Riccio's. Bothwell confessed to having carried it out by the counsels of Moray and Morton ; several of his retainers who were present at the crime were executed after confessing their guilt. Morton was executed for his share in the crime, and Lethington only escaped a similar fate by the skin of his teeth. The grounds for charging the Queen with being one of their accomplices have been examined. If it cannot be asserted that it has been conclusively proved that she was innocent, it can, at least, be said that there is no case to go before a jury, the single exhibit that can be laid on the table against her being of such dubious authenticity.

CHAPTER EIGHT

ELIZABETH HONOURS HER PROMISES

When I escaped from Lockleven, ready to give battle to my rebels, I remitted to you, by a gentleman express, a diamond jewel, which I had formerly received as a token from you, and with assurance to be succoured against my rebels, and even that, on my retiring towards you, you would come to the very frontiers in order to assist me, which had been confirmed to me by divers messengers.—Mary to Elizabeth, November 8th, 1582.

§1

THE day of Mary's arrival in England dates the beginning of one of the ugliest episodes in the history of the English monarchy. It was characterised by a Queen's treachery, lying, promise-breaking and cruelty, such as can hardly be matched. The above quotation, from a letter written fourteen years later, states an historical fact in terms which could have been much more emphatic without exaggerating the truth. It might be held that, until the incident of the Casket Letters had been closed, Elizabeth was justified in keeping Mary in England, but, in view of her decision regarding the value of those documents as evidence against the Scottish Queen, she was then called upon in honour to give material effect to the many promises that she had made,

The argument used by the supporters of Elizabeth that she was bound for her own preservation to retain Mary in prison because of the plots in which she engaged, cannot be sustained. Mary did not begin to plot until Elizabeth's dishonourable and treacherous treatment forced her to abandon her belief in her cousin's sincerity and to seek a means of escape from her prison. At no period in the history of their relations had Elizabeth affected to be so friendly to Mary as when she was her rebels' prisoner in Lochleven. She had told the rebels

plainly that "it does not appertain to subjects so to reform their prince, but to deal by advice and counsel, and failing thereof to recommend the rest to Almighty God." She had written to Throckmorton: "You shall plainly declare unto them, that if they shall determine anything to the deprivation of the Queen their Sovereign Lady of her royal estate, we shall make ourselves a plain party against them, to the revenge of their Sovereign for example to all posterity. And therein we doubt not but God will assist us, and confound them and their devices, considering they have no warrant nor authority by the law of God or man to be as superiors, judges, or vindicators over their Prince and Sovereign, howsoever they do gather or conceive matter of disorder against her." She had sent Leighton to convey her warmest congratulations to Mary on her escape from Lochleven, with instructions to secure her restoration to the throne. Never did Elizabeth give Mary such good cause to trust her goodwill, and it was for this reason that the Scottish Queen decided, against all the warnings and protests of Lord Herries and others, to cross the Solway and put her trust in her good sister's word.

Elizabeth described Mary's arrival in England as inconvenient, but, learning that the Scottish Queen had arrived without so much as a change of clothing, she gave at once an index of the quality of hospitality that might be expected from her. She sent Mary a pair of well-worn shifts, two pieces of black velvet, and two pairs of shoes. Sir Francis Knollys, whose unhappy duty it was to present these gifts, has left record of the embarrassment he suffered when he tried to cover the insult by stammering excuses that some mistake must have occurred; and he tells how Mary received them with an understanding smile and—silence.

This honest nobleman had already given Cecil an eloquent impression of his unexpected prisoner. "This lady and princess," he wrote, "is a notable woman; she seemeth to regard no ceremonious honour beside the acknowledging of her estate regal: she sheweth a disposition to speak much, to be bold, to be pleasant, and

to be very familiar. She sheweth a great desire to be avenged of her enemies, she sheweth a readiness to expose herself to all perils in hope of victory, she delighteth much to hear of hardness and valiancy, commanding by name all approved hardy men of her country, although they be her enemies ; and she concealeth no cowardness even in her friends. The thing that most she thirsteth after is victory, and it seemeth to be indifferent to her to have her enemies diminished either by the sword of her friends, or by the liberal promises and rewards of her purse, or by division and quarrels raised amongst themselves : so that for victory's sake pain and peril seemeth pleasant unto her : and in respect of victory, wealth and all things seemeth to her contemptible and vile. Now what is to be done with such a lady and princess, or whether such a princess and lady be to be nourished in one's bosom ? or whether it be good to halt and dissemble with such a lady, I refer to your judgment."

John Wood had already arrived in London with his casket translations by the time this pertinent inquiry became a matter for discussion between Elizabeth and Cecil ; and Moray was urging the English Queen to get them read by the judges, and expressing personal anxiety to know whether, if "the principal agreed with the copy," the case against Mary would be regarded as established. The result of her perusal of the translations was that Elizabeth was oppressed by a sensitive care for her reputation, and wrote to Mary that she could not receive her into her presence while the cloud of Moray's accusations remained, but that once she had been acquitted of this "crime," it would be one of her "highest worldly pleasures" to receive her.

Despite her declaration, through Cecil, that nothing had been shown to cause her to have an evil opinion of Mary, Elizabeth decided to deny herself this high worldly pleasure, when the rebel accusers were given licence to return to Scotland. Her manner of honouring this promise was to have Mary removed, on January 26th, from Bolton Castle to the straiter and more dangerous prison of Tutbury Castle. This was a damp and

dilapidated house, entirely lacking in such primitive sanitary arrangements as were common at the time. Two of the Queen's servants died during her stay there, and all of them were ill at one time or another.

The pretext that Elizabeth advanced as the reason why Mary must remain in confinement was, at this stage, that she must be content with such treatment until it was clear that she was unguilty of her husband's murder, an accusation against which Elizabeth had denied her an opportunity to defend herself. Later, when this palpable pretence had worn too thin to retain any texture of reality, she advanced as the reason for her continued ill-treatment that a heavy grievance existed of which she had to complain, to wit, that Mary had bequeathed all her rights in the crown of England, in case she died without children, to Henri, Duke of Anjou, second son of Henri II, and Catherine de Medici. The Scottish Queen, supposing in her curious innocence that she had at last discovered the mysterious cause of her continued detention, wrote urgently to France, and the French King and Queen immediately executed deeds denying that Anjou had any such cession. This cancellation of the documents which Mary had signed at the age of fifteen had, of course, no effect on Elizabeth, though the incident may have caused Mary to modify the ingenuousness of her belief in her cousin's sincerity.

The position that Mary took up, as soon as she discovered that she had made a serious mistake in taking Elizabeth at her pledged word, was that Elizabeth should either fulfil her promise and help her against her rebels, or suffer her to depart and obtain help from other of her friends and allies. Elizabeth refused to do the one, or allow the other, thereby forcing upon Mary the alternative courses of either remaining a resigned captive against whom no charge had been proved; or striving to regain her liberty and her rights by whatever means might be available. The opinion expressed by Sir Francis Knollys should have warned Elizabeth that only the second course would appeal to "such a lady and princess."

§2

The misery of the Queen of Scots during her nineteen years' imprisonment awakens sympathy, but the pathos of Elizabeth arouses the deeper emotion of pity. As one traces the incidents of those years, characterised by an intermittent ebb and flow of uncertainty as to the best and right course of action, Elizabeth is revealed as an unhappy victim of temperament and warring instincts. From the moment that she acted like an inquisitive gossip demanding that Moray should tell all he knew, until the day that she raged against her ministers for carrying out the execution at Fotheringhay, upon her signed warrant, she shows herself in her relations with Mary, weak, vacillating and insincere. Fear of Mary, and all that she represented as her heir, rode the English Queen relentlessly from the moment she ascended the throne with the Catholic stigma of illegitimacy to plague her with a sense of insecurity. In the eyes of Spain, France, Austria, and of her own Catholic subjects she was usurping Mary's throne, and the Scottish Queen had persistently refused to renounce the right that these supporters accorded her. She, on her side, had refused to acknowledge Mary as her proper successor, should she die childless, lest she should double the danger of assassination by the disgruntled Catholics.

The question to which she could never discover a convincing answer during Mary's incarceration, was as to whether it was better and safer from her viewpoint to release Mary or to keep her as a prisoner. In this state of uncertainty she sent her commissioners to Mary to discuss treaty after treaty, and, when there seemed a likelihood that her terms would be accepted, she invented some pretext to break off negotiations. Possibly this policy of offering treaties was guided in part by a desire to keep alive Mary's hope of ultimate release on terms, and so to divorce her from her attempts to win the aid of France or Spain to essay a Catholic restoration.

Elizabeth's ministers and clergy, who had not her personal dread of assassination, did not share her uncer-

tainty. They took the uncompromising view that Mary's death was the only guarantee of the safety of their Queen's life, and urged her, in season and out, to cut off her head. There is little doubt but that her way was the wiser. If she had done as she was pressed to do, and executed Mary with the Duke of Norfolk, a war with Spain—if not with France as well—would have been almost unavoidable. Had the kingdoms of Catholic Europe been led by the peers of Elizabeth and Cecil, a Catholic restoration in England by force of arms could easily have been effected by a foreign invasion concerted with the Northern Rising. Elizabeth's policy of resisting the advice to expedite the execution of the Queen of Scots was sound; yet it is questionable whether she was equally wise in retaining her as a prisoner, thereby making her the focussing point of anti-Protestant intrigues.

The basic fact, of course, is that both Queens were the comparatively helpless pawns in the control of forces and circumstances in the face of which their individual wills were powerless. Superficially they were just rival claimants to one throne, the occupant of which held the other in her power. That simple situation would have been capable of adjustment and settlement if the rival claims had been the result of purely material considerations. Fate had, however, complicated the issue by making them the protagonists of opposing factions which had been created by the most powerful development of human thought that had occurred since the opening of the Christian era.

The religious aspect of the Lutheran Reformation was secondary in effect, though first in time, to its political significance. Out of the defiance of the Pope's supremacy on religious grounds had rapidly developed the will to divorce civil government from Church control. For a time, the old tradition of Church control persisted, particularly in Calvinism; but the Reformation had practically no effect upon the sacrosanct position of the Pope as head of the Roman Catholic Church. New Churches came into being, and continue to do so, but the Roman Church survived with the religious powers and authority

of the Pope undiminished and unimpaired. Behind the Inquisition on the one side and the Protestant persecutions on the other, were motives of action infinitely more potent than a fanatical religious insistence that heresies must not be tolerated.

Persecution in the name of Christ is an impossibility. The Catholic persecutors were fighting for the survival of the established order of a legally priest-ridden State; and the Protestant persecutors were fighting for freedom from that thralldom and to make permanent the disestablishment of that order.

Henry VIII, Elizabeth, and Cecil were not notably religious folk; they were hard-thinking zealots of a political and governing ideal, which happened, in the inscrutable way of fate in pushing forward the development of humanity, to suit and serve their personal ambitions. Mary, as her earlier protestations of religious policy revealed, was a loyal Catholic, as a woman; and a believer in the possibility of compromise between the old order and the new, as a governing princess. She seems to have believed either that Protestantism could be tolerated under the Roman power as it had been; or that adjustment of that power could be effected to make toleration possible. Whatever the degree of her religious devoutness, she proved by her actions and declarations that Catholicism satisfied her religious aspirations, and that she was unconvinced by those who attempted to persuade her that Protestantism was better. She was certainly no fanatic in religion, and would have been as unsatisfactory a persecutor as Knox considered Lethington to be. Her experience as a Queen afflicted by Protestant rebels and upstarts, and her reception as a suppliant for promised assistance by a Protestant Queen, combined with the effect of their joint association against her, had practically destroyed any hope that she had ever had of an accommodation with Protestantism. The consequence of these overpowering circumstances was that she was driven involuntarily to become the titular champion of a Catholic restoration in England and Scotland. Her alternative was personal religious apostasy

which her character and temperament rendered impossible. From the vantage-point of historical perspective, her cause can be seen as foredoomed to failure and defeat; but viewed from Tutbury, Chatsworth, and Sheffield, at the time, it was hopeful enough for her to risk her life to attempt. France, Spain, and Austria, were still Catholic, and large and influential sections of the populations of England and Scotland were eager for her as a Catholic to rule both countries.

§3

The first plot in which Mary engaged for her liberation through the intention of a Catholic restoration was a development of a scheme originated by Maitland of Lethington for her marriage to the Duke of Norfolk, a man whose worldly position and power made him a good match, but whose weakness of character and brain put him into the same category as the unfortunate Darnley. The Duke was one of the English commissioners; and, during the sittings of the conferences at York, Hampton Court, and Westminster, Mary was at Bolton much in the company of Lady Scrope, his sister, who was eager in her sympathy for the proposed marriage. The matter was first introduced by Lethington while the commissioners were assembled at York, and, judging by the minor part that he elected to take in the Conference, it appears that his interest was more directly centred upon arranging the marriage than in sharing in the plot for the defamation of the Queen. Lethington's whole course of conduct and action from this time onwards provides material for speculation as to what were his real intentions towards the Sovereign he had served so well, and whom, after a brief period of treacherous opposition, he was to continue to serve until his death.

Norfolk was a Protestant, as well as one of the most powerful of the English nobles, and his marriage to the Scottish Queen might have been finally acceptable to the Scottish estates, if proper safeguards as to religion had been provided. At the earliest stage of the negotiations the proposal was for no more than a private marriage,

Mary to demit her crown definitely, and to live as Norfolk's wife in England. When, however, he and the other commissioners were shown privately the casket contents, Norfolk came to the conclusion that there would be no public charge against Mary based upon them, and he advised her not to demit her crown. News of the negotiations reached Elizabeth, who accused Norfolk of his intention to marry Mary; and forced Moray's hand—supposing it needed forcing—by threatening to support the regency of Châtelhérault, of the Hamilton faction, if he refrained from proceeding to a full exposure of the case against his Queen. Moray affected to succumb to this threat, and meanwhile pretended to be in favour of Lethington's marriage scheme, in order to ensure a safe journey home through the pro-Mary northern territories of England. His guile deceived Norfolk who, after Moray was safely back in Scotland, commissioned Lord Boyd, on the Queen's as well as on his own behalf, to assure Moray that his aim was "the uniting of this land into one kingdom in time coming, and the maintenance of God's true religion." This declaration was calculated to reassure the Scottish Estates with a view to persuading them to consent to the annulment of the Bothwell marriage.

Moray, who had affected to imprison Mary because she would not give up Bothwell, now persuaded the convention of the Estates to decline to allow her to do so, by refusing to agree to the Bothwell divorce. His real attitude towards the Norfolk marriage was now betrayed. Any marriage was impossible so long as the Queen was still Bothwell's wife.

From this point the progress of the marriage scheme changes its apparent direction in a bewildering way. The Protestants supported it on condition that Mary's title to the succession should be recognised, that the religion established in England should be established in Scotland, and that the marriage project itself should be referred to Elizabeth for consent. The English Privy Council, on August 27th, 1569, resolved to settle the English succession on Mary. Simultaneously the English Catholics

were supporting the marriage with the intention of enthroning Mary as their Catholic sovereign, Norfolk having declared his readiness to become a Catholic, as soon as the Queen was at liberty.

The Queen herself was writing during this month of August to Philip of Spain, calling upon him to help her in the ultimate scheme for a restoration by force of arms as soon as she was free, and assuring him that when that happy event occurred she would deliver herself and her son into his hands.

The Duke of Northumberland, and other northern Catholic Lords, began to prepare for an armed rising, the intention being to rescue Mary from Tutbury. The deposition of Elizabeth, the marriage of Mary and Norfolk, and their coronation as King and Queen were the ultimate aims of the Catholic rebels.

The Earl of Leicester, from motives of his own, informed Elizabeth of the intention to ask her consent to the marriage, as the forces in favour of it were strong enough to make it awkward for her to refuse. She at once sent for Norfolk and railed at him for his doings. He weakly retorted to her displeasure by absenting himself from Court without leave, whereupon Elizabeth sent Lord Huntingdon and Viscount Hereford to assist Shrewsbury in warding Mary, and ordered her to be removed from Tutbury to Wingfield. After being absent for ten days Norfolk was peremptorily ordered to repair to the Queen at Windsor; while he also received encouraging words from Mary, who was anticipating an immediate rising.

Norfolk's true character began to display itself. He wrote to the Duke of Northumberland advising the postponement of the rising, and excused his non-appearance before Elizabeth by falling sick of an ague. A sharp order to come to Windsor, in a litter if necessary, cured his ague; and he set out for Court, was arrested on the way, and by October 8th was safely lodged in the Tower.

Elizabeth was learning something about the defiant quality of her royal prisoner. Mary was returned to

Tutbury, with her three gaolers in attendance, and her own coffers and those of her servants were ordered by Elizabeth to be searched for writings which might implicate her in the Norfolk conspiracy. She also ordered Huntingdon to devise means whereby Mary's train might be reduced to thirty persons, and to ensure against messages leaving or reaching her "without our knowledge." The Scottish Queen riposted by writing to the King of France to intercede for her better treatment, with the result that, on November 7th, Huntingdon was relieved of his keepership.

The Northern Rising, led by the Duke of Northumberland, began on November 3rd, and the rebels succeeded in reaching Tadcaster—only fifty-four miles from Tutbury—in ten days. Mary was hurried to Coventry while the rebellion was in progress, but the premature and ill-devised effort ended in utter defeat, the Duke of Northumberland fleeing across the Border. Moray, in defiance of the laws of Border hospitality, captured the rebel leader, and was negotiating to hand him over to the English Queen. This last crowning infamy was complicated by negotiations into which he had entered for the return of Mary to his tender mercies, his delivery of Northumberland being partially conditional upon this. It was, however, fated that he should not complete these negotiations. On January 23rd, 1570, the bullet fired by Hamilton of Bothwellhaugh put a term to his ambitious career. His henchman, Morton, concluded the sale of Northumberland. A few weeks before his murder he had attempted another indirect blow at Mary's cause in general and the Norfolk marriage in particular. He persuaded Captain Thomas Crawford—he of the faked deposition—to accuse Lethington of being of the counsel, foreknowledge and device of Darnley's murder. This treacherous device against his old comrade in counsel and rebellion was defeated by the ready action of Kirkcaldy of Grange, who was now holding Edinburgh Castle for the Queen. "The Mirror of Chivalry" lived up to his honourable sobriquet, rescued Lethington and took him with him into the Castle.

§4

The narrow margin by which the Northern Rising had been defeated in its object of rescuing and setting at liberty the Scottish Queen, and the complication of her Scottish policy caused by Moray's assassination, gave Elizabeth grounds for grave anxiety as to what now was the best course to pursue. The determination shown by her Catholic subjects in rising in rebellion on behalf of her prisoner, and the dastardly removal of the man upon whom she could rely to prevent any invasion by Mary's Scottish adherents, gave a temporarily ominous appearance to the situation. She executed the Duke of Northumberland as a deterrent to any remaining impulse towards a renewal of rebellion among her own subjects, and, after a few months' delay, ordered the Duke of Sussex to ravage the Western Borders of Scotland, upon the pretext that her rebels were being sheltered there. Sussex carried out his instructions faithfully and ruthlessly, and returned from his extensive foray leaving behind him five hundred towns and villages utterly destroyed and the countryside laid waste. This imitation of her father's methods of restraining and impoverishing Scotland had the desired deterrent effect. The charge of harbouring rebels was a transparent pretext to disguise her response to an appeal which Lennox, now Regent of Scotland, had made through Randolph for a diversion to be made to relieve his desperate situation, caused by the threatening power of Mary's loyalists. The Border foray was successful in defeating the intention of a concerted action by Huntly from the north, the Hamiltons from the west, and the Border Lords.

These repressive measures resulted in at least temporary security from a repetition of the troubles of the previous year, but the cause of them remained in her prison, undismayed by failure and unresting in intention to obtain her liberty and revenge. Mary was removed from unhealthy Tutbury to pleasanter and safer quarters at Chatsworth, where her keeper, the Earl of Shrewsbury, believed he would be better able to control any attempts

at plots and secret correspondence. But Elizabeth knew that wherever she warded the Scottish Queen as a prisoner, nothing could prevent plots by herself and her friends. Uncertainty as to the best course of action began again to plague her, and in May, Cecil was instructed to draft a Treaty for her liberation, and submit it to the Council. On the 7th of May, 1570, the Council met and approved the terms drafted by the Secretary, but Mary found them unacceptable, and declined the advice of the Bishop of Ross to sign the Treaty, and to flout its terms as soon as she was free, on the ground that they were obtained under duress. The terms amounted, in effect, to a ratification of that old bone of contention, the Treaty of Edinburgh, and, captive or free, Mary had no intention of renouncing any rights she possessed by law and nature.

The wavering decision to be quit of her troublesome guest seems to have remained with Elizabeth. In October Cecil and Sir Walter Mildmay, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, conferred upon a Treaty with Mary at Chatsworth, and when they returned to Court, after over a fortnight's promising negotiations, there was a good prospect of its successful conclusion. It became evident at once that, either Elizabeth had again changed her mind, or that the whole negotiations were a simple piece of bluff, calculated to keep Mary's hope alive. After the departure of the English ministers, the promise of a settlement simply faded, Elizabeth vouchsafing no clear reason why she did not proceed with the Treaty.

The bewildered Mary wrote to France and Spain urging each to bring pressure to bear on Elizabeth to conclude the Treaty, or, alternatively, to invade England and accomplish her release. A Catholic bull had annulled the Bothwell marriage on the ground of rape, and she was now free to marry the Duke of Norfolk, who had been released from the Tower in August. She was very willing to come to a treaty arrangement with Elizabeth, but the alternation of approach and withdrawal was trying her patience and her faith in the sincerity of the English Queen's intentions. She learnt that Elizabeth was pretending to make matrimonial overtures to the Duke



JAMES STEWART, 14th EARL OF MORAY

of Anjou, a device which had the natural effect of cooling any French ardour in her own cause. This forced her to concentrate her efforts upon Philip of Spain, with the plan for her marriage to Norfolk and a Catholic restoration in England and Scotland by force of arms.

A Florentine long resident in England, named Robert Ridolfi, agreed to act as Mary's and Norfolk's joint emissary to the Pope and Philip. The purpose underlying his instructions was made quite clear in a letter which he carried to the King of Spain, in which Norfolk declared that "he had decided to place himself at the head of the English and Scottish nobility for the purpose of re-establishing the Catholic religion in the two kingdoms." Ridolfi arrived in Madrid, and the plot was fully considered by the Spanish Council, who discussed the necessity of assassinating Elizabeth as an incident in the scheme. Mary, whose facilities for secret correspondence had become more and more restricted, first learnt that things had gone awry on May 14th, 1571, when she heard that the Bishop of Ross had been imprisoned for complicity in the Ridolfi plot, and that, except for a few unimportant details, everything had been discovered through his confession and that of a messenger, named Charles Bailly, who had been captured at Dover. By September Elizabeth's secret intelligence department had unravelled everything, Norfolk's complicity was revealed and he was sent to his old quarters in the Tower. Minor conspirators were arrested and tortured, with the result that Mary's share in the plot was disclosed. On the same day that Norfolk was imprisoned, Lennox died at the hands of a Hamilton assassin, and was succeeded in the Regency by the Earl of Mar.

The Duke of Norfolk was tried by his peers on January 16th, 1572, and was beheaded six months later. During the interval between his trial and execution, heavy pressure was used to persuade Elizabeth to execute his royal accomplice in the Ridolfi plot. On May 28th both Houses of Parliament besought her to execute Mary without delaying further, and so to put a term to the danger of a Catholic revival through the agency of her

adherents. Elizabeth, however, had other schemes in her long head, such as would relieve her, as she hoped, from the odium at home and abroad that would be associated with Mary's death at her hands. She rightly guessed that the utter failure of the first Norfolk marriage rising, and the devastating effects upon Mary's English prospects resulting from the discovery of the grandiose Ridolfi plot and Norfolk's condemnation, had rendered any new efforts on her behalf extremely improbable. So, with a magnanimity that in a few months was to be proved insincere, she answered the demand of her loyal subjects, saying : "She could not put to death the bird that had flown to her succour from the hawk." Consequently, Norfolk was beheaded alone, a week later. Four commissioners from Elizabeth, to satisfy public opinion, were sent to Mary to demand answers to thirteen articles of accusation arising out of the late plot and other matters. This was apparently not meant to be a serious attempt to accuse her, since no action of any kind was taken when the commissioners returned to report to their mistress.

It is questionable whether Mary herself knew of the dangers that hovered so closely over her during this year of 1572. She undoubtedly was informed of her cousin's seeming clemency in the face of her subjects' wrath against her, but it is less certain that she knew that Cecil, now Lord Burghley, urgently recommended her execution as a retort to the massacre of the Huguenots on St. Bartholomew's Eve, which occurred on August 24th. The clergy were as sure that her death was the will of God as the politicians were confident that it was a necessity of English safety and peace. The Bishop of London presented to Burghley, on September 5th, a series of " Suggestions for the Safetie of Our Queene and Realme, if God will," the first of which ran thus : " Forthwith to cutte of the Scottishe Queene's head : *ipsa est nostri fundi calamitas*," a proposition with which the Primate associated himself in a letter of his own to the minister.

Two days later, the reasons for the English Queen's reluctance to kill the bird that had flown to her for succour were revealed. She had evidently bethought

herself of the negotiations with Moray, which his assassination had truncated. On September 7th, a Mr. H. Killigrew was despatched to Scotland with verbal instructions—instructions too dangerous and disgraceful to be committed to paper. He was to propose the surrender of the Queen of Scots to her subjects upon the following conditions :

1. That the Scots should prefer a request for her surrender.
2. That Mary should be put to death as soon as she reached Scotland.
3. That the name of Elizabeth should not appear in the negotiations.

The Regent, Mar, had no compunction about impersonating the hawk and surreptitiously receiving back the bird from the person who had succoured it against him, but the Earl of Morton, who was powerful and the next in the running for the Regency, persuaded him to another opinion. The loyalists were not so weak that the Protestants could risk such a dramatic act as the execution of the Queen unless they could rely upon an English army to help them. He had had a closer acquaintance with Elizabeth than the ingenuous Mar, and he rightly interpreted her insistence that her name should not be mentioned. He saw clearly that, having delivered Mary to her subjects for execution, she could not, without publicly implicating herself, send the rebel Scots any help against their enemies, the Queen's avenging friends. Mr. Killigrew was, in consequence of Morton's stand, sent back to Elizabeth with the answer that her suggestion could only be considered if she were prepared openly to share the responsibility for the execution. In other words, she must be prepared to guarantee money and armed aid to meet the consequences of the deed. Elizabeth, of course, adhered to her original conditions, and her masterpiece of cunning treachery remained only as a theoretical proof of the subtlety of which she was capable.

A few weeks later the Earl of Mar died ; and Morton, who had headed Mary's enemy subjects as the most implacable since Moray's death, succeeded to the Regency.

On November 24th, 1572, John Knox departed this life, leaving Elizabeth sole survivor of the triumvirate to conclude the work in which they had been so long associated.

The English Queen, evidently bearing the new Regent no serious ill-will for rejecting her execution proposal, sent him the help he needed to compel Kirkcaldy of Grange, with Lethington, to surrender Edinburgh Castle. On May 29th, 1573, Kirkcaldy and Lethington surrendered to the English commander, Sir William Drury, who pledged the honour of Elizabeth for their safety and kind treatment. The English Queen, gleeful at the overthrow of Mary's last stronghold in Scotland, ordered Drury to hand the prisoners over to Morton. Lethington died of illness before they could try and execute him; but Kirkcaldy was condemned and, denied the headsman's axe, was humiliatingly done to death on a gibbet at Edinburgh Cross. There is something of tribute to their Queen in the spectacle of the two men who had been so intimately concerned in the circumstances that ended in her imprisonment in Lochleven, returning to their loyalty and fidelity, and holding unto death her last stronghold in Scotland. They had both served her sincerely, and had deserted her only when they considered her actions and policy mistaken and ill-advised. The inference of their return to the support of her cause is that they considered it a nobler and a better one than that which had usurped it. With their defeat and death the Queen's cause in Scotland was lost, except a miracle should happen. Morton saw to it that there should be no chance of miracles during his period of power.

CHAPTER NINE

THE SPANISH ILLUSION

§1

THE story of the years following the defeat of the Ridolfi plot would be sordid, if its ugly gloom were not illuminated by recurring instances of the innate splendour of Mary's great spirit. As the narrative unfolds itself, incident by incident, the reader is impressed increasingly by the unshakable and unbribable integrity of the imprisoned Queen. Her passion for liberty was infinite, and she could have ensured its appeasement at almost any stage of those fourteen years upon terms that would have appeared dishonourable to no one but herself. The highway of expediency was beckoningly open to her, but she scorned to put foot upon it. The rights upon which she stood guardian possessed, by this time, only their spiritual, or theoretical, reality, and to renounce them would have been, in the judgment of less high-minded people, the sensible thing to do. Her right by Catholic law to Elizabeth's throne certainly existed in the realm of abstract thought, but the death-knell of the Duke of Norfolk had also sounded the doom of the prospect of a Catholic restoration until, at least, Elizabeth's death. Her sole right to the throne of Scotland was hardly less abstract in the face of events. Calumny had been effective, and was one of the bulwarks with which the Protestant Lords supported the sovereignty that they had thrust prematurely upon her infant son. Had Mary been willing to renounce to him her right, the differences between her and the Protestants could have then been compounded, even without her changing her religion. Yet to her this act, which must have appeared to many onlookers as the obvious one,

would have been, in her eyes, nothing less than the compounding of a felony, a felony not against herself but against truth and right, and the sanctity of honour.

The alluring temptation of insincere religious apostasy she scarcely glanced at. This betrayal of God would have been a simple and complete solution to all her problems, and its attractiveness as a means to that end was insidiously strong. None but she herself would have needed ever to know that it was insincere—her change of religion. She could easily have taken the cowardly and secret way favoured by thousands of her contemporaries, and have become a pseudo-Protestant, masking her Catholic spirit behind the form of Protestantism. By such an act she would have dispersed Elizabeth's fear, since it would have been tantamount to acknowledging the English Queen's legitimacy and right; and would have removed the danger of revolt and assassination by Catholics, by robbing them of the person in whom their hopes were centred. What opposition to her restoration might have remained in Scotland would have been easily suppressed by the armed help that Elizabeth would have gladly given her. The loss of French and Spanish support would have been practically negligible compared with the repossession of her power, backed by the support of a strong English alliance. This foreign support must have seemed, then, to consist only of words and expressions of sympathy and promise. Even though the hope of a successful rising and invasion for a Catholic restoration still glowed in her mind, it was only a hope against the certain reality of the rewards for apostasy.

Every worldly argument was in favour of Mary, if she had affected to become converted to the new religion, and had been prepared to be sincere in her affectation. She may merit no credit for having been spiritually incapable of such baseness, but she cannot be denied the credit of having been fine enough in texture to resist the temptation to accept her liberty and all the kingdoms and power of her world in exchange for a single act of personal treachery. Beside such constancy of integrity, no crime that has been alleged against her can seriously diminish

respect. Mary's long and unsuccessful struggle had as its aim the triumph of right as she, and millions of others, conceived it. In the accomplishment of that triumph her own liberty and restoration were bound up, and she declined resolutely to secure those things for herself at the expense of the greater cause. The facts proved this with incontestable conviction. She lived in an age when it was as normal for a monarch to be assassinated, as for a martyr to be burned, for religious ends. Execution or assassination, it was only a question as to which party possessed the power, as to which method was employed. Elizabeth had been willing to hand Mary over to the Scots to be put to death; *if* Mary looked through her fingers when her friends were plotting Elizabeth's death, she had at least, what her cousin had not, as excuse—desperation and years of illegal imprisonment to dissuade her from intervening.

The period is not unlike a stage, upon which are four sets of scenery, before which four acts are played, some more than once, in varying sequence; and all the acts have the same "curtain"—frustration of the Queen. Spain, France, James and Elizabeth dominate each act in turn, and each leading actor plays a part of insincere promise or weak intention. To each of them, as Fate rings the changes, the hapless Queen of Scots plays in hopeful desperation, but each time they desert her and their honour, and leave her to watch the curtain fall, alone, but undismayed. At times she seeks to play off one against the other, but prompters and stage-hands betray her to each and any who will put coin into their palms. Spain, France and James at last abandon their histrionics, and join the audience, leaving the stage to Elizabeth to perform the last tragic act, on which the curtain and her headsman's axe fall together—neither falling cleanly. There is an epilogue in which Elizabeth rants at her second leads for speaking lines and performing parts which she had not intended: but she is cravenly attempting to excuse to the critics the abominable ending of her poor play.

§2

A detailed narrative of the frustrated plots which followed one another through the next twelve years is outside the scope of this study. All these conspiracies were defeated by premature disclosure before they had progressed into even the preliminary stages of action, and the chief reward of the student who examines them is the revelation of the masterly qualities displayed by Sir Francis Walsingham as an unscrupulous and relentless sleuth. The Northern Rising saw the last sword drawn and the last gun fired in the cause of Queen Mary. The efforts made on her behalf thereafter never emerged from the wordy negotiator phase. Walsingham's detective work, Philip of Spain's caution, France's reluctance and James's lack of filial qualities, all played their parts in robbing those efforts of historical importance.

One outcome of the Ridolfi conspiracy was that Elizabeth's qualifications to pose as Mary's legitimate gaoler were strengthened. The English Queen would have found it embarrassing before that event, to answer convincingly an unbiased interrogatory of justification for retaining her cousin as her prisoner. She had had no right in law or in justice to keep her perpetually on remand for a crime with which she had never been formally charged, and for which she had not been tried; and yet she stated as the reason for Mary's detention that she had not yet cleared herself of the accusation relative to Darnley's murder. That she had been given no opportunity to clear herself was a consideration of which it would have been dangerously indiscreet of anyone to remind Elizabeth. The second pretext—the cession of her sovereign rights to the French—had been nullified by explicit repudiation by the beneficiaries of the obsolete cession. It might have been wiser and more effectual for Mary to have concentrated her efforts for release upon insisting, through the Courts of Europe, upon such a trial before competent and unprejudiced judges, as she had originally demanded. She might ultimately, by this means, have succeeded in forcing Elizabeth's hand. The Norfolk

marriage scheme, however, had set her definitely upon the course of securing her liberation and restoration by force of Catholic arms. She had thus transformed her otherwise innocent self into a declared enemy of England, by becoming party to a project which aimed at unseating Elizabeth and changing the newly established religion.

This situation was the direct result of Elizabeth's unjust treatment of the Scottish Queen, who was compelled to seek desperate measures in her desperate circumstances. Despite the several overtures for her liberation by treaty which she pretended to make to Mary, Elizabeth knew that it was now practically impossible to grant her liberty on any terms. Mary's part in the Spanish plot had made it clear that the throne of England was the price that she meant to extort for the humiliation that she had suffered at her cousin's hands.

Elizabeth recognised that no treaty, signed under duress of imprisonment, would be regarded as binding by Mary; and she knew that Mary would remain uncontented so long as she was unrevenged. Death or perpetual imprisonment were Elizabeth's only alternative courses now. She had lost two excellent opportunities of having her done to death, when Parliament had begged her to execute Mary after the Norfolk trial, and when anger and revenge for the massacre of the Huguenots had renewed the clamour for her death. It was, by this time, regrettable that she had let these chances slip, misled by her confidence that the hawk would gladly receive back the bird into its talons. It had to be imprisonment now, with all the expense and irritation inseparable from that course; until, at least, some new occasion should arise, or be fomented, that should have the necessary touch of dramatic plausibility to lessen the odium of execution. The crucial change in Mary's circumstances caused by her complicity in the Ridolfi conspiracy may be expressed by the statement that she had lost all chance of release and had, instead, to seek deliverance.

There were traits in the Scottish Queen's character that made her an awkward and unsubmitting prisoner. Her optimism was undefeatable and her pure courage

served a pride of race that nothing could subdue. Humiliated and dethroned as she was, she adhered with unwavering tenacity to her belief that such sovereign rights as were hers were trusts as well as honours, with which she had been divinely endowed, and which she might surrender only by death. Never for a moment of her lonely, hopeless years could she forget her royal estate, or allow anyone to ignore it, or treat it lightly. When her last keeper had robbed her of all her papers at Elizabeth's orders, she reminded him that there were two things of which no man could rob her—her royal blood and her religion. Sir Francis Knollys had noted this insistence upon her right to homage, when first she came to England: “she seemeth to regard no ceremonious honour beside the acknowledging of her estate regal.” Shrewsbury and Kent were to yield, despite themselves, to this quality of intrinsic majesty in her, when they sought to treat her as an ordinary woman who was about to be beheaded, and not as a Queen, during her last hour at Fotheringhay.

She entered this new phase of her ravelled destiny with undiminished determination to regain the lost power, to exercise her divine right as Queen, or die in the attempt. If, at moments of especial difficulty, she affected to consider renunciation of part of her rights to her son, she had no intention of allowing that renunciation to survive longer than events compelled. She seemed never able to see herself as what to all appearances she was—the hopeless prisoner of a pitiless rival. She regarded herself as the legitimate occupant of the thrones of England and Scotland, by divine right, thrones which her cousin and her son were usurping through the power of the new, heretical religion. Protestants had reduced her to this plight; Catholics should restore her to the repossession of them.

§3

For the remainder of her life, Mary Stewart pitted her indomitable will against the forces that were arrayed against her by circumstance, self-interest and fate. She

had been overcome by force and treachery, and she sought to rehabilitate herself by the use of those instruments, which were the normal ones of the period. In her struggle she relied upon the reality of religious zeal and of blood relationships, and in the end she learnt that her reliance was misplaced.

Philip of Spain was an honest Catholic, but was too cautious to become a Catholic crusader, even for Mary's promise of complete submission of herself, her son, and her kingdoms to him in return for her liberty and restoration. He was content to let Catholicism survive as best it could, and was only prepared to assist in its survival if his temporal power was threatened. His long and irritating flirtation with the idea of a conquest of England was carried on from purely temporal motives, and the fact that it would result in the restoration of the old religion was simply an effect that was bound to follow the event. He was never prepared to war with Elizabeth on behalf of religion ; nor was Mary's plight in any sense a goad of chivalry to spur him into action. She could form a pretext, but her offer to become, with James, his vassal, was futile and unreal, since, if he had conquered England, he would have been in a position to order her to his will in any case. It is doubtful whether his intentions to fall in with her plans were ever fundamentally sincere or serious. He certainly viewed with real alarm the Anglo-French alliance that threatened to come into being when the marriage between Elizabeth and the Duke of Alençon appeared certain. He was relieved of the necessity of pursuing his preparations for armed intervention by Elizabeth receding from the match, which she had pretended to consider only to the end that French help should be alienated from Mary.

Philip maintained his attitude of friendly concern for the Scottish Queen for two principal reasons. Firstly, there was always the likelihood that, should Elizabeth die, Mary would succeed to the English throne, and be in a position to supplant her son, who had supplanted her on the throne of Scotland. Potentially, in this sense, Mary was a power to be reckoned with in the future.

Philip probably knew that, on the prorogation of the Parliament of the spring of 1576, Elizabeth had asked the Speakers of the two Houses and the judges to inform her who was the true heir to herself, and that they had told her, reluctantly, that Mary Queen of Scots was the person. He was, therefore, compelled from motives of self-interest to retain the goodwill of so powerful a prospective sovereign. His second reason derived from the probability that Mary's Scottish adherents might at any time effect her release in concert with the English Catholics; and that James, himself, when he was old enough to act on his own initiative, might call upon him to join in an invasion of England for the liberation of his mother, with the threat of France forestalling Spain in the rôle of liberator, and the rewards of that office.

Philip's caution was justified by events, and would have served his turn even if events had shaped themselves otherwise than they did. So he listened with affected sympathy to the various proposals and conditions which the imprisoned Queen showered upon him, and had recourse to every trick of diplomatic delay that would postpone action without casting serious doubts upon his sincerity as a champion. In this course he was greatly assisted by Walsingham, whose secret service was operating almost infallibly. Philip let the plots go on, because he could not help himself; but their periodic discovery by the Englishman relieved him, with satisfying regularity, of the necessity of fulfilling the active part that was expected of him.

He gave languid attention to Mary's increasingly generous and desperate offers. If it could be effected without his being distressed by helping, he was willing enough that James should be transported to Spain, as she wished; he was ready to treat for the prince's marriage to an Infanta, and to have England and Scotland as his vassal states—all of which Mary offered him. But first, as he told her somewhat bluntly, she must persuade James to become a Catholic and make himself master of his kingdom, whereupon he would willingly help them

to depose Elizabeth and allow the new sovereign of Britain and her heir to become his vassals. He learnt, without undue gratitude, that Mary had made a will in which she declared him her heir, if James remained a Protestant. Philip was content to concern himself with immediate realities, while Mary was compelled by her situation to concentrate upon potential realities, which could only be achieved by his help. He knew—what Mary seemed incapable of realising—that, so long as she was a prisoner in England, everything that she offered existed only in the world of hopeful dreams. If he conquered England, her power would be hardly more notable than that of the dispossessed Elizabeth. He would be in the position of a dictator, and most of what Mary was offering him would be his by right of conquest. He knew that such a complete conquest, one that would give him such power, was practically impossible; and it would serve no purpose attractive to him to go into the business for anything less than that.

The penultimate plot into which he was unwillingly dragged resulted in inflaming Elizabeth and her ministers against him. The Duke of Lennox, the Duke of Guise, and the English and Scottish Catholics were all in it, and he had to simulate an interest; though he left his share in the hands of the capable Mendoza, his ambassador in London. Guise asked him for an hundred thousand crowns, intimating that he had his plans well advanced for the invasion of England; but Philip bade him apply to the Pope for the money. While Guise was acting on this cautious advice, Walsingham once more relieved Philip of prospective embarrassment. The Englishman had corrupted by bribes a secretary, Chérelles, in the French Embassy in London, who had furnished him with copies of all the important documents relating to the plot, including many of Mary's letters. Thus the whole plot was soon known. Sir Francis Throckmorton and several minor agents were implicated and condemned to death after being tortured on the rack several times for the extraction of information; Mendoza himself was ordered to quit the country, after an uncomfortable interview with

the English Privy Council, and diplomatic relations with Spain were suspended in January, 1584.

For nearly two years more the conspiracy continued in being, achieving nothing for Mary, because Philip did not intend that it should do more, so far as he was concerned, than keep her comfortable in the illusion that he was still her friend and champion. James, for ulterior ends, affected to approve the great conspiracy, and he took his personal share in the riot of treachery, deception, and double-dealing which finally destroyed his mother's hopes and doomed her to death at Fotheringhay.

Mary's position by this time was pitiable. The rigour of her confinement had become so severe that her channels of secret correspondence had practically been permanently stopped. She was, however, allowed the delusion that some were still open, as, in fact, they were—in order that every letter she wrote and received, after 1584 had dawned, should be read, copied, and doctored by Walsingham, whose one immediate ambition was to accumulate by any means sufficient evidence on which to execute the Queen of Scots. The means that Walsingham adopted were diabolically clever, as well as inhumanly unscrupulous, a fact that will emerge when the Babington conspiracy is considered.

CHAPTER TEN

IN SHREWSBURY'S KEEPING

§ I

AMONG the many mysteries which make inscrutable wide areas of the tapestry of Mary Stewart's life, is the problem as to how she was able to maintain a correspondence with her friends and agents during her imprisonment. The cause for astonishment in regard to the plots on her behalf is not that they were so regularly discovered and frustrated, but that they ever came into being at all.

As early as April 29th, 1569, we find Cecil passing on to Shrewsbury Elizabeth's orders that no stranger was to be allowed to see or have speech with Mary, and that her keeper must contrive to see his personal friends in such places as made accidental contact with his prisoner impossible. Six months later, dissatisfied without reason with the Earl of Shrewsbury's service, Elizabeth contemplated appointing the Earl of Huntingdon, whose attitude towards Mary was known to be one of animosity, to take his place. On September 22nd, 1569, she gave Huntingdon his instructions in her own hand, and an extract can be given to reveal her characteristic vacillation in all matters connected with her treatment of her cousin : " You shall give order," she wrote, " that no such common resort be to the Queen as has been, nor that she shall have such liberty to send posts as she hath done, to the great burden of our poor subjects ; and if she shall have any special cause to send to us, then you shall so permit her servant with the warrant of your hand, and none to come otherwise." Before the letter was despatched, the English Queen seems to have concluded

that there was danger in allowing anyone from her prisoner to go to Court, so she added a postscript: "We will that no person be suffered to come from the Queen of Scotland with any message or letter, but if she will write to us, you shall offer to send the same by one of yours . . . for our meaning is that for a season she shall neither send nor receive any message or letter without our knowledge." At this time Elizabeth had got wind of the Norfolk marriage plot, and, among other measures that she adopted for the safer custody of Mary, was the reduction of her retinue to thirty persons.

Mary was in indifferent health whenever she was at Tutbury Castle, and on March 14th she was removed to Wingfield. There she had a sharp illness, and, in May, Shrewsbury removed her to more comfortable quarters at Chatsworth, where she remained four months. Elizabeth's perturbation anent the Norfolk marriage project then caused her to send Huntingdon and Lord Hereford to assist Shrewsbury, and in late September she was returned, with her three custodians, to insanitary Tutbury. Despite these changes of residence and the closeness of her warding, the Scottish Queen contrived to write frequently to the Duke of Norfolk and others, and to receive full information of what was doing on her behalf. She was provided with some excitement when the threatening success of the Northern Rising, in November, caused her hurried removal for a few days to Coventry, lest the rebels should succeed in reaching Tutbury and liberating her. On January 22nd, 1570, she wrote a touching little letter to her son, and sent him "one little hackney with saddle and ye rest of ye harnessing thereto," telling him that the Earl of Shrewsbury was sending him another to make the pair. Those in charge of the four years old boy prevented his receiving either the ponies or the letter; and it is not a matter for surprise that Mary expressed satisfaction rather than grief when, a few days later, she heard that the Earl of Moray had been assassinated. This cruelty of alienating the son from his mother by refusing to let him receive letters from her or write to her, continued until he was well into his teens, the years

intervening being used to alienate him in affection and policy from her.

In May 1570 Mary bade farewell to hated Tutbury, and after six months spent at Chatsworth was removed to her more or less permanent quarters at Sheffield Castle. She was saddened during the early summer of this year by the news of the devastation of the Border by Elizabeth's troops and told Shrewsbury that "she is sorry that the Queen's majesty uses her subjects so."

The hopes of a treaty settlement with Elizabeth were raised during May, but the terms offered were unacceptable. Five months of suspense passed; and then there were days of negotiation at Chatsworth with the redoubtable Cecil himself, and Sir Walter Mildmay, the Chancellor of the Exchequer. When the English ministers returned to Court, on October 24th, it seemed certain to both sides that a settlement would be reached. Shrewsbury, who was again in sole charge, had informed Cecil that he wished to remove his charge to a safer and more convenient place; and, on reaching Court, Cecil wrote as though an accommodation for Mary's release was practically assured: "her Majesty said, at the first, that she trusted so to make an end in short time that your Lordship should be shortly acquitted of her." Elizabeth's friendlier attitude was further demonstrated by her giving permission for Mary to have horse exercise, in Shrewsbury's company.

It remains uncertain whether Elizabeth was sincere in her purpose or simply playing her normal game of cat-and-mouse. Two events gave her good cause to modify any tenderness she may have had towards Mary. While the negotiations were in progress at Chatsworth, a man named Hall, concerting with the sons of the Earl of Derby, was discovered in a plot to liberate Mary, but there is no evidence that she was cognisant of their activities on her behalf. Also, before the end of the year, Mary, impatient at the non-conclusion of the promising treaty, wrote to France and to Spain, urging them to bring pressure to bear upon Elizabeth to conclude it, or,

alternatively, to invade England to help her. These letters were intercepted by Walsingham.

Hope of the conclusion of a treaty receded without Mary receiving any satisfactory explanation, and, in desperation, she committed herself to the Ridolfi plot. Early in May, Shrewsbury was being ordered by Cecil to interrogate her regarding various details connected with the plot, from which she must have dolefully concluded that the hope she had in that grandiose scheme must now be abandoned. She probably learnt that Walsingham was pitilessly on the trail, and unravelling the whole conspiracy with his customary brilliance and brutality.

The inquiry proceeded for months, several of the members of the Privy Council, at one period, attending the Tower for over a fortnight to hear the confessions fall from the lips of tortured conspirators. The severity of the procedure moved the official in charge of the torture chamber, Sir Thomas Smith, to appeal to Cecil : " Though we be importune to crave revocation from this unpleasant and painful toil, I pray you be not angry with us. I assure you, for my part, I would not wish to be one of Homer's gods if I thought I should be Minos, Eacus, or Rhadamanthus ; I had rather be one of the least *Umbræ in Campis Elysii*. I suppose we have gotten as much as at this time is like to be had, yet tomorrow do we intend to bring a couple of them to the rack, not in any hope to get anything worthy that pain or fear, but because it is so earnestly commanded unto us." This extract illuminates the ferocity of purpose with which the forces arrayed against the imprisoned Queen applied themselves to the task of preventing her escape or restoration. It also throws light upon the hopelessness of her position, and reveals obliquely the courage that she required to persist in her indomitable course for the next sixteen years.

§2

Mary spent an uneasy autumn and winter. Her most reliable servant, the Bishop of Ross, was in prison and confessing all he knew of the plot. On September 5th

the Duke of Norfolk was put into the Tower, and on the same day the Scottish Regent, Lennox, was assassinated. A week later, Cecil, now Lord Burghley, instructed Shrewsbury to let her know "that her letters and discourses, in articles, being in cypher to the Duke of Norfolk, are found, and he has confessed the same and delivered the alphabet; so she may not now find it strange that her Majesty uses her in this sort, but rather think it strange that it is no worse." In December, her keeper's secretary gave her a Latin version of Buchanan's scandalous *Detectio* to read, when, perhaps for the first time, she saw what had been made of her Glasgow letter to Bothwell, and the extent to which she had been defamed to the whole world, in English and French editions, as well as in the one she read. Her optimistic spirit must have been heavily tried, also, by learning from Shrewsbury the dreadful extent of the disclosures that were being made: that Lord Cobham was a prisoner; that the Hall plot was known; that Sir Henry Percy, who had been given the measurement of her window by the Bishop of Ross, had only failed to make his attempt last Easter because her lodging had been changed; and that at least three other plots for her rescue had been disclosed. Shrewsbury must also have told her that Elizabeth was debating whether to proceed against the Bishop of Ross for treason and conspiracy. On January 20th, 1572, she was informed that the Duke of Norfolk had been tried by his peers and found guilty of high treason.

The news of the many rescue plots which Shrewsbury had conveyed to Mary, he had himself learnt from Burghley, and it had the effect of increasing his vigilance. He realised that, somehow or other, his prisoner was, despite all his precautions, succeeding in having letters and messages conveyed to and from her. He began to pry into base matters himself, and unearthed a series of letters hidden beneath a stone, which he forwarded to Burghley, and learnt that they bore directly on the Ridolfi plot. In March he was satisfied that he had so arranged matters as to prevent all secret carrying of Mary's letters. He who was ever ready to impress upon his charge the exceeding

tenderness with which his Queen treated her, probably informed her that both Houses of Parliament, as well as the Upper House of Convocation, had urged Elizabeth to proceed with her execution ; and had repeated Elizabeth's *bon mot* about the succoured bird and the hawk. However resilient and tempered her spirit was, in the face of all these attacks upon her composure, Mary could hardly fail to be apprehensive when, towards the end of May, four commissioners from Elizabeth waited upon her for her answers to thirteen articles of accusation arising out of the recent conspiracy. The intention, as has been said, must have been simply to strain her moral equipoise, for she heard nothing more of the matter after her troublesome visitors departed. The hope she had kept alive, that the passing of months since his condemnation must mean that the sentence on the Duke of Norfolk was not intended to be carried out, went the way of all her recent hopes, when he was executed on June 6th, 1572.

§3

In a letter from Shrewsbury to Burghley, dated August 2nd, 1572, the following passage occurs : " She (Mary) made importunate request unto me this time that I should write unto her Majesty to desire knowledge of her pleasure whether her Highness would give her leave to sue for her access unto her Majesty or not, whereof she is still vehemently desirous, alleging, as she was wont, that she had great matters to impart unto her Majesty, expedient for her knowledge ; but I utterly refused to deal for her therein, albeit I thought it not amiss to advertise you of this her earnest motion." Shrewsbury's state of mind towards his charge at the moment is demonstrated as being ridden by fears regarding her messengers and correspondence, for, immediately following the above passage, he asked Burghley to move that no one whatsoever shall have license to repair to Mary, except he bring " her Majesty's express warrant for my discharge." This indicates that someone had visited her, or that something had occurred, to rouse his suspicions ; that, in fact, Mary had received information which he would have prevented.

A proper reading and interpretation of history must rest largely upon the significance attached to the juxtaposition of events and the discovery of any interrelation that may be premissible. It is, at least, curious that Mary should have chosen so unpropitious a time in which to urge her vehement desire to have audience of Elizabeth. Not since she had come to England had she less cause to expect that Elizabeth would be in a frame of mind to grant her the privilege. It is further clear, from the absence of any direct reference to a similar request in any previous letter from Shrewsbury, that Mary must have been inordinately insistent in trying to move her keeper to further her desire for a meeting and to write to his Queen for permission for Mary, in conformity with usage in such cases, to sue for the favour of a meeting. Shrewsbury, while he is almost contemptuous of it, gives as Mary's reason for desiring an interview, that she had great matters to impart. Whether it was her wont to plead this reason or not, does not detract from the certainty that there was something of unusual importance on Mary's mind to persuade her to beseech a meeting at a time when her stock with Elizabeth was more than usually low.

The Guises were the centre of Mary's chief hope from France, and through the Bishop of Glasgow, her Paris ambassador, and through less open channels, she was in as constant communication with them as with anyone. The Guises were working, for their own ends more than for Mary's, for the overthrow of Protestantism, and, as anything that they might plan or effect to that end strengthened Mary's personal cause by putting heart into her Catholic adherents, it can be reasonably assumed that they would keep her informed of anything that was moving, or contemplated, towards that end.

The massacre of the Huguenots on St. Bartholomew's Eve occurred on August 24th, hardly three weeks after Shrewsbury had refused to deal for Mary in the matter of an interview with Elizabeth to impart certain great matters that it was expedient for her to know. Mary was too intelligent to deceive herself with the expectation that her cousin would consent to the long-denied meeting on

any known or trivial pretext ; and, if, as is here suggested, she had been made aware by the Guises that a dramatic attack on the Huguenots was imminent, it was obviously impossible for her to communicate her knowledge except secretly and verbally to Elizabeth hersclf. In the political custom of the time, what was spoken could always be denied, while what was written was incontrovertible evidence.

If Mary had been able to warn Elizabeth and avert the massacre, it would have had to be under such guarantees that her betrayal of the Guise plans could never be brought home to her. Mary could not afford to jeopardise the goodwill the Guises gave her, unless she was sure of some compensating advantage. Had Mary herself been allowed to see Elizabeth at that time, with the proposal to give the Protectrix of Protestantism an opportunity to save the Protestant cause in France from the deadliest blow it ever received, on the condition that the lapsed treaty of liberation should be revived and concluded, it is highly probable that the history of the Queen of Scots would have ended with the Scottish crown upon her head again.

Mary always expressed herself as opposed to persecution in religion, although she was in no mind to put herself out, at this time, to help, altruistically, the Protestants who had undone her. It would, however, have been a marvellously telling argument on her side for her tolerant standpoint to have been the instrument in preventing the tragedy of St. Bartholomew's Eve. Doubtless she was willing, provided Elizabeth granted her terms, to be known as the champion of tolerance, even though it meant the loss of the Guise interest, as well as Philip's.

The possibility, if ever it did exist, was rendered of no account by Shrewsbury's unimaginative fidelity as Mary's custodian.

The day on which the Bishop of London was advising Burghley to cut off the Queen of Scots' head, Burghley himself, in a letter to Shrewsbury dealing with the means to be adopted for the surety of Protestantism in England in view of the massacre in France, says laconically : "We

have sent H. Killigrew this day unto Scotland " and " All men now cry out of your prisoner. The will of God be done." If his prayer was answered, it was destined that the Bishop of London's demand should not be carried out by Scots' proxy, Morton refusing the office of executioner unless Elizabeth's representative would support him on the scaffold.

§4

After St. Bartholomew's, Mary's small liberty was further restricted. She was forbidden to move outside the castle of Sheffield, and Shrewsbury added thirty soldiers to the little garrison. The strain of events during the past year seems to have had effect upon her nerves, for, on December 2nd, 1572, we find Shrewsbury reporting that she had openly declared to him her hopes from France, Spain and Austria, and that " rather than continue this imprisonment she sticks not to say she will give her body, her son, and country for liberty." A fortnight later her keeper, who was ever encouraged to give her any ill news that was to be communicated, was told : " Your Lordship may assure her that the Earl of Morton is chosen and established Regent, with a greater assent and liking of the nobility than was looked for." Which was equivalent to telling her that her cause in Scotland would now be opposed by her most relentless enemy, the man who—as the custodian of the Casket Letters—was the acute cause of her being where she was.

The same quality that made Mary cautious and beguiling when matters seemed to be moving well and towards success, led her into a mood of indiscreet boasting and defiance as the only shield she had against despair. In February 1573 she had a long and strangely unguarded talk with her keeper. He had told her that " she was of good reason to blame her own self for her wants and lacks," seeing that it was well known that she had used large sums for practices (plots) in England. Whereupon, carried away by her own appreciation of the clever arrangements she had made, she told him in effect that there was no need for Elizabeth to worry about money of

hers that came into England ; " for I have given sure order that all which I can make shall be employed in my service in Scotland, which shall not be defeated for aught they can do." Shrewsbury duly reported these, and other, interesting facts to Burghley, who, when time and occasion served, acquainted his royal mistress with them. Elizabeth, ever parsimonious, seized on the information for practical purposes, and at once suggested that Mary should defray her own expenses out of her dowry, a suggestion which her prisoner showed no inclination to follow. Her French relatives and agents had already begun to plunder her dowry and she was being hardly driven to procure the revenues she needed for essential purposes.

About this time Elizabeth's never-resting fear for Mary's safe keeping began to manifest in spasmodic expressions of doubt as to whether Shrewsbury was taking all the precautions that were necessary. As early as March 1573 he wrote personally to Elizabeth, in reply to one of her veiled reproofs, intimating that he was prepared to kill Mary rather than let her escape or be rescued : " I shall keep her forthcoming at your Majesty's commandment, either quick or dead." In spite of this anxiety, however, the English Queen permitted Shrewsbury to take Mary to Buxton to enjoy the baths there, her health having been bad intermittently for years, and, at this time, aggravated by increasing hardness of a growth in her side, an ailment which had been recurrent for seven or eight years. Elizabeth doubtless felt that she could now afford to be less strict with her troublesome prisoner. Edinburgh Castle had fallen by this time, and the redoubtable Kirkcaldy and Lethington, Mary's leading champions in Scotland, were dead ; so there was little to fear from the North so long as Morton held the reins there. Opportunities for plotting abroad were as few as Shrewsbury's stringent precautions against secret carrying of letters could make them ; and since Elizabeth's animosity to Mary arose directly from her political fears, she was willing enough to improve her conditions as far as might be with safety.



MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS, IN IMPRISONMENT
From a painting by Oudry

Mary showed her appreciation by sending Elizabeth presents of the embroidery and other needlecraft which she worked with skill and enthusiasm, which Elizabeth received kindly, promising things in return—a promise she failed, by some queer twist of temperament, to fulfil. She visited the baths at Buxton again in 1574, and in September her secretary, Raulet, died of consumption. Shrewsbury, despite her protests, seized and searched the dead man's coffers, but was rewarded with no incriminating documents. The Cardinal of Lorraine died in December, leaving her grieving for him and for the damage his removal did her cause in France, and, indirectly, in Spain. A second blow to her cause followed a few months later with the death of Charles IX, and the succession of Henri III with his pro-James policy. Claude Nau, who had been a secretary in the employ of the Cardinal of Lorraine, succeeded Raulet as her secretary in May 1575. He was recommended by Elizabeth, and there is good reason to suppose that he was disloyal to Mary during the whole of his service.

§5

Three years passed, enlivened by few happenings. Mary became reconciled to Darnley's mother, the Countess of Lennox, whose second son had married—to Elizabeth's great indignation—Elizabeth Cavendish, the daughter of the Countess of Shrewsbury by an earlier husband. Of this marriage Arabella Stewart was born, to come under the protection of Elizabeth as a possible claimant to both thrones. Evidences of Elizabeth's fears occurred from time to time, even Burghley having to tell Shrewsbury that he had been sharply reproved by his Queen for visiting Buxton while Mary was there, and that he was candidly charged with favouring the Queen of Scots as "a secret well willer to her and her title," who "had made his party good with her." Mary, at any rate, was never under this illusion about the faithful and patriotic Treasurer.

Activity on Mary's behalf among her friends began to

reawaken towards the end of 1577, when, on account of reports of the Queen's escape, Shrewsbury was urged by Burleigh to do everything possible to increase his circumstantial vigilance. In November of this year, Mary endeavoured to get a letter through to her ambassador in Paris, on the subject of her son's conveyance to France from Scotland, the stimulation of the Pope's activity, and other dangerous matters, which was intercepted by Walsingham. In the following year Mary's health was bad, but she was struggling desperately in her evil circumstances, writing for help to Spain and the Duke of Guise, letters which fell into Elizabeth's hands and caused that sovereign to threaten to cause Parliament to declare Mary incapable of inheriting the crown. The Countess of Lennox, who had proved her confidence in Mary's innocence of Darnley's murder, by her friendship of several years, died.

Morton had been driven from power in March, but her hopes of the ascendancy of her Scottish party were dashed by his restoration to the Regency in August, in which month she first learnt that Elizabeth was treating for marriage with the Duke of Alençon. A letter on this subject from the Duke of Sussex to his Queen illuminates the principal reason for these marriage negotiations: "You shall," he wrote, "take away, and suppress, all practice for competition"—of Mary, for the English crown—by having at least one child. Sussex was too ingenuous: Elizabeth knew that she was physically incapable of producing such a barrier, but knew that, in view of Mary's recent correspondence, it was needful to give French policy a hopeful English bias for the time being. Mary had a further experience of the implacable animosity of the Lords of the Scottish Council, when in July Claude Nau was permitted to go to Scotland with a letter and messages to James, now twelve years old. They refused either to allow the secretary to have an audience, or to let the King have the letter, on the pretext that Mary had addressed it "To my Son" and not to James, as King of Scotland.

During these years Mary and her keeper had similar

causes of personal distress. The Queen's agents in France were robbing her and refraining from paying her revenues ; and he was having continually to plead for the payment of his reduced allowance, even having to contemplate selling his plate to meet his immediate obligations. Later the French ambassador passed on to Leicester Mary's complaint that she was kept " very barely of her diet " and had at Easter had little and bad meat ; that Shrewsbury had excused this on the ground that his allowance was withheld.

It was, of course, simply a cunning device of Elizabeth's to force Mary to keep herself out of her dowry, as she had suggested years before. She had no mercy upon Shrewsbury in relation to the right fulfilment of his charge, forcing him even to compose to his disadvantage certain differences with some refractory tenants, lest they should conceive the idea of revenging themselves upon him by espousing Mary's cause and plot to rescue her. He was actually forbidden to allow his children to visit him, Elizabeth suspecting them of being friendly to his prisoner. However uncomfortable all this might be for the Earl of Shrewsbury, the policy Elizabeth was pursuing was brilliantly sound, for she realised more clearly than anyone that it was wise for others to retain the goodwill of the person who would undoubtedly succeed her, should she die first. Shrewsbury seems to have had almost as bad a time as his prisoner, but clung to his post from fear of his honour and loyalty becoming suspect if he relinquished it. He kept his servants from all avoidable contact with Mary's, but he failed to prevent one, Andrew Marvyn, from falling in love with Jane Knite, one of Mary's attendants, and his woe was great when the Privy Council ordered him to discharge his man ; because Marvyn was the person he relied upon for relief when he was in the grip of his enemy, the gout. By the end of 1580 he begged to be allowed to justify his discharge of his office personally to Elizabeth, but she put him off, knowing that it would be disconcerting to be asked for payment of the allowance which was heavily overdue to him,

In June 1581 the Earl of Morton was executed for complicity in the Darnley murder, and Mary asked George Douglas to "make my commendations to the lairds who are most near my son, and shew unto them that I give them most hearty thanks for their duty employed against the Earl Morton, who was my greatest enemy, of whose execution I am most glad." She was to learn, however, that the removal of this enemy was unlikely to serve her Scottish cause.

On November 11th, 1581, Robert Beale, a clerk of the Privy Council, arrived at Sheffield to enquire into the grounds for complaints that Mary had made upon the hardness of the conditions of her confinement. He found the Scottish Queen seriously ill, having been in bed for three weeks; and so crippled with disease that she could not walk six steps without assistance. As a result of his report, a coach was sent to Sheffield, but Mary was too weak for some time to avail herself of this means of taking the air.

Again Beale and Mildmay aroused Mary's hope of a treaty settlement, and again—in June 1582—a settlement seemed promising, but Elizabeth again terminated them, never at a loss for a pretext, on the ground that she had intelligence from the French King regarding a new plan of the Guise family in favour of Mary. The real cause of Elizabeth's displeasure is, however, to be found in a letter, dated July 30th, 1582, from Walsingham to Shrewsbury, revealing her as angry and piqued because Mary had addressed directly members of her Council as if she reputed Elizabeth to be "in her minority or else doth mean to use her Council as witnesses against her."

On November 8th, 1582, Mary, in despair, wrote the following letter to Elizabeth:

"Madam, upon that which has come to my knowledge of the last conspiracies executed in Scotland against my poor child, having reason to fear the consequence of it, I must employ the very small remainder of my life and strength before my death to discharge my heart to you fully of my just and melancholy complaints; of which I desire that this letter may serve you as long as you live after me for a perpetual testimony and engraving upon

your conscience, as much for my discharge to posterity as to the shame and confusion of all those who, under your approbation, have so cruelly and unworthily treated me to this time, and reduced me to the extremity in which I am. But for their designs, practices, actions, and proceedings, though as detestable as they could have been, have always prevailed with you against my very just remonstrances and sincere deportment ; and as the power which you have in your hands has always been a reason for you among mankind ; I will have recourse to the living God, our only judge, who has established us equally and immediately under him for the government of his people.

" I will invoke him till the end of this my very pressing affliction that he will return to you and to me (as he will do in his last judgment) the share of our merits and demerits one towards the other. And remember, madam, that to him we shall not be able to disguise any thing by the point and policy of the world ; though my enemies, under you, have been able, for a time, to cover their subtle inventions to men, perhaps to you.

" In his name, and before him sitting between you and me, I will remind you that, by the agents, spies, and secret messengers, sent in your name to Scotland while I was there, my subjects were corrupted and encouraged to rebel against me, to make attempts upon my person, and, in a word, to speak, do, enterprize, and execute that which has come to the said country during my troubles ; of which I will not, at present, specify other proof than that which I have gained of it by the confession of one who was afterwards among those that were most advanced for this good service, and of the witnesses confronted with him. To whom, if I had since done justice, he had not afterwards, by his ancient intelligences, renewed the same practices against my son, and had not procured for all my traitorous and rebellious subjects who took refuge with you that aid and support which they have had, even since my detention on this side ; without which support I think the said traitors could not since have prevailed, nor afterwards have stood out so long as they have done.

" During my imprisonment at Lochleven, the late Trogmarton (Throckmorton) counselled me on your behalf to sign that demission which he advertised me would be presented to me, assuring me that it would not be valid. And there was not afterwards a place in Christendom where it was held for valid or maintained except on this side [where it was maintained], even to have assisted with open force the authors of it. In your conscience, madam, would you acknowledge an equal liberty and

power in your subjects ? Notwithstanding this, my authority has been by my subjects transferred to my son, when he was not capable of exercising it.

" And, since I was willing to assure it lawfully to him, he being of age to be assisted to his own advantage, it is suddenly ravished from him, and assigned over to two or three traitors ; who, having taken from him the effectiveness of it, will take from him, as they have from me, both the name and the title of it, if he contradicts them in the manner he may, and perhaps his life, if God does not provide for his preservation.

" When I was escaped from Lochleven, ready to give battle to my rebels, I remitted to you, by a gentleman express, a diamond jewel, which I had formerly received from you as a token, and with assurance to be succoured against my rebels, and even that, on my retiring towards you, you would come to the very frontiers in order to assist me ; which had been confirmed to me by divers messengers.

" This promise coming, and repeatedly, from your mouth (though I had found myself often deceived by your ministers), made me place such affiance on the effectiveness of it, that, when my army was routed, I had come directly to throw myself into your arms, if I had been able to approach them. But, while I was planning to set out, there was I arrested on my way, surrounded with guards, secured in strong places, and at last reduced, all shame set aside, to the captivity in which I remain to this day, after a thousand deaths, which I have already suffered from it.

" I know that you will allege to me what passed between the late Duke of Norfolk and me. I maintain that there was nothing in this to your prejudice or against the public good of this realm, and that the treaty was sanctioned with the advice and signatures of the first persons who were then of your council, under the assurance of making it appear good to you. How could such persons have undertaken the enterprize of making you consent to a point which should deprive you of life, of honour, and your crown, as you have shown yourself persuaded it would have done to all the ambassadors and others, who speak to you concerning me.

" In the meantime, my rebels perceiving that their headlong course was carrying them much farther than they had thought before, and the truth being evidenced concerning the calumnies that had been propagated of me at the conference to which I submitted, in full assembly, of your deputies and mine, with others of the contrary party in that country, in order to clear myself publicly of them ; there were the principals, for having come to

repentance, besieged by your forces in the castle of Edinburgh, and one of the first among them (Lethington) poisoned, and the other (Kirkaldy of Grange) most cruelly hanged ; after I had twice made them lay down their arms at your request, in hopes of an agreement, which God knows whether my enemies aimed at.

" I have been for a long time trying whether patience could soften the rigour and ill-treatment which they have begun for these ten years peculiarly to make me suffer. And, accommodating myself exactly to the order prescribed me for my captivity in this house, as well as in regard to the number and quality of the attendants which I retain, dismissing the others, as for my diet and ordinary exercise for my health, I am living at present as quietly and peaceably as one much inferior to myself, and more obliged than with such treatment I was to you, had been able to do ; even to the abstaining, in order to take from you all shadow of suspicion and diffidence, from requiring to have some intelligence with my son and my country, which is what by no right or reason could be denied me, and particularly with my child ; whom, instead of this they endeavoured by every way to persuade against me, in order to weaken us by our division.

" I was permitted, you will say, to send one to visit him there about three years ago. His captivity, then at Sterling, under the tyranny of Morton, was the cause of it, as his liberty was afterwards of the refusal to make a like visit. All this year past I have several times entered into divers overtures for the establishment of a good amity between us, and a sure understanding between these two realms in future. About ten years ago commissioners were sent to me at Chatsworth for that purpose. A treaty has been held upon it with yourself by my ambassadors and those of France. I even myself made last winter all the advantageous overtures concerning it to Beal that it was possible to make. What return have I had for them ? My good intention has been despised, the sincerity of my actions has been neglected and culminated, the state of my affairs has been traversed by delays, postponings, and other such like artifices. And, in conclusion, a worse and more unworthy treatment from day to day, in spite of anything which I am obliged to do to deserve the contrary, and my very long, useless, and prejudicial patience, have reduced me so low that mine enemies, in their habits of using me ill, now think they have the right of prescription for treating me, not as a prisoner, which in reason I could not be, but as some slave, whose life and whose death depend only upon their tyranny.

" I cannot madam, endure it any longer ; and I must in dying

discover the authors of my death, or living attempt, under your protection, to find an end to the cruelties, calumnies, and traitorous designs of my said enemies, in order to establish me in some little more repose for the remainder of my life. To take away the occasions for all pretended differences between us, banish from your mind, if you please, all that has been reported to you concerning my actions ; review the depositions of the foreigners taken in Ireland ; let those of the Jesuits last executed be submitted to you ; give liberty to those who would undertake to accuse me publicly, and permit me to enter upon my defence. If any evil be found in me, let me suffer for it ; it shall be patiently, when I know the occasion of it : if any good, allow me not to be worse treated for it, with your very high commission before God and man.

" The vilest criminals that are in your prisons, born under your obedience, are admitted to their justification ; and their accusers and their accusations are always declared to them. Why, then, shall not the same order have place towards me, a sovereign queen, your nearest relation and lawful heir ? I think that this last circumstance has hitherto been on the side of mine enemies the principal cause of all their calumnies, to make their unjust pretensions slide between the two, and keep us in division. But, alas ! they have now little reason and less need to torment me more upon this account. For I protest to you, upon mine honour, that I look this day for no kingdom but that of my God, whom I see preparing me for the better conclusion of all my afflictions and adversities.

" This will be to you to discharge your conscience towards my child, as to what belongs to him on this point after my death ; and, in the mean time, not to let prevail to his prejudice the continual practices and secret conspiracies which our enemies in this kingdom are making daily for the advancement of their said pretensions ; labouring, on the other side, with our traitorous subjects in Scotland, by all the means which they can to hasten his ruin ; of which I desire no better verification than the charges given to your last deputies sent into Scotland, and what the said deputies have seditiously practised there, as I believe, without your knowledge, but with good and sufficient solicitation of the earl my good neighbour at York. (The Earl of Huntingdon.)

" And on this point, madam, by what right can it be maintained that I, the mother of my child, am totally prohibited not only from assisting him in the so urgent necessity in which he is, but also from having any intelligence of his state ? Who can bring him more carefulness, duty, and sincerity than I ? To whom can

he be more near? At the least, if, when sending to him to provide for his preservation, as the Earl of Cheresbury gave me lately to understand that you did, you had been pleased to take my advice in the matter, you would have interposcd with a better face, as I think, and with more obligingness to me. But consider what you leave me to think, when, forgetting so suddenly the offence which you pretended to have taken against my son, at the time I was requesting you that we should send together to him, you have dispatched one to the place where he was a prisoner, not only without giving me advice of it, but debarring me at the very time from all liberty, that by no way whatever I might have any news of him.

" And if the intention of those who have procured on your part this so prompt visit to my son had been for his preservation and the repose of the country, they needed not to have been so careful to conceal it from me, as a matter in which I should not have been willing to concur with you. By this means they have lost you the goodwill which I should have had for you. And, to talk to you more plainly on the point, I pray not to employ there any more such means or such persons. For, although I hold the Lord de Kerri (Cary) too sensible of the rank from which he is sprung, to engage his honour in a villainous act, yet he has had for an assistant a sworn partisan of the Earl of Huntingdon's, by whose bad offices an action as bad has nearly succeeded to a similar effect. I shall be contented, then, if you will only not permit my son to receive any injury from this country (which is all that I have ever required of you before, even when an army was sent to the borders, to prevent justice from being done to that detestable Morton), nor any of your subjects to intermeddle any more, directly or indirectly, in the affairs of Scotland, unless with my knowledge, to whom all cognizance of these things belongs, or with the assistance of some one on the part of the most christian king my good brother, whom, as our principal ally, I desire to make privy to the whole of this cause, notwithstanding the little influence that he can have with the traitors who detain my son at present.

" In the meantime, I declare with all frankness to you, that I hold this last conspiracy and innovation as pure treason against the life of my son, the good of his affairs, and that of the country; and that while he shall be in the state in which I understand he is, I shall consider no message, writing, or other act that comes from him, or is passed in his name, as proceeding from his free and voluntary disposition, but only from the said conspirators, who are making him serve as a mask for them, at the risk of his life.

" But, madam, with all this freedom of speech, which I can foresee will in some sort displease you, though it is but the truth itself, you will think it still more strange, I am sure, that I importune you again with a request of much greater importance, and yet very easy for you to grant. This is, that, not having been able hitherto by accommodating myself patiently for so long a time to the rigorous treatment of this captivity, and, carrying myself sincerely in all things, yea, even in such as could concern you ever so little, in order to give some assurance of my entire affection for you, all my hope being taken away of being better treated for the very short period of life that remains to me, I supplicate you, for the sake of the painful passion of our Saviour and Redeemer, Jesus Christ, again I supplicate you, to permit me to withdraw myself out of your realm, into some place of repose, to seek some comfort for my poor body, worn out as it is with continual sorrows, that, with liberty of conscience, I may prepare my soul for God, who is daily calling for it.

" Believe, madam, that the physicians whom you sent this last summer are able sufficiently to judge the same, that I am not for a long continuance, so as to give you any foundation of jealousy or distrust of me. And, notwithstanding this, require of me whatever just and reasonable assurances and conditions you think fit. The greatest power rests always on your side to make me keep them ; though on no account whatever would I wish to break them. You have had sufficient experience of my observance of my simple promises, and sometimes to my prejudice ; as I showed you upon this very point about two years ago. Recollect, if you please, what I then wrote to you ; and you will never be able to bind my heart to you so much as by kindness, though you keep my poor body languishing for ever between four walls ; those of my rank and nature not suffering themselves to be gained or forced by any rigour.

" Your imprisonment, without any right or just ground, has already destroyed my body of which you will shortly see the end, if it continues there a little longer ; and my enemies will not have much time to glut their cruelty on me : nothing is left for me but the soul, which all your power cannot make captive. Give it, then, room to aspire a little more freely after its salvation, which is all that it now seeks, rather than any grandeur of this world. It seems to me that it cannot be any great satisfaction, honour and advantage to you for my enemies to trample my life under foot, till they have stifled me in your presence. Whereas, if, in this extremity, however late it be, you release me out of their hands, you will bind me

strongly to you, and bind all those who belong to me, particularly my poor child, whom you will, perhaps, make sure to yourself by it.

" I will not cease to importune you with this request till it is granted. And on this account I beg you to let me know your intention; having, in order to comply with you, delayed for two years till this time to renew my application for it. In the mean time, provide, if you please, for the bettering of my treatment in this country, that I may not suffer any longer, and commit me not to the discretion of any other whatever, but only your own self from whom alone (as I wrote to you lately) I wish to derive all the good and the evil which I shall experience in your dominions. Do me this favour, to let me, or the ambassador for France for me, have your intention in writing. For, to confine me to what the Earl of Scherbury or others shall say or write about it on your behalf, I have too much experience to be able to put any assurance in it; the least point which they shall capriciously fancy being sufficient to make a total change from one day to another.

" Besides this, the last time I wrote to those of your council, you gave me to understand that I ought not to address myself to them, but to you alone; therefore, to extend their authority and credit only to do me hurt, could not be reasonable; as has happened in this last limitation, in which, contrary to your intention, I have been treated with much indignity. This gives me every reason to suspect that some of my enemies in your said council may have procured it with a design to keep others of the said council from being made privy to my just complaints, lest the others should perhaps see their companions adhere to their wicked attempts upon my life, which, if they should have any knowledge of them, they would oppose, for the sake of your honour and of their duty towards you.

" Two things I have principally to require at the close: the one, that, near as I am to leaving this world, I may have with me for my consolation some honest churchman, to remind me daily of the course which I have to finish, and to teach me how to complete it conformably with my religion, in which I am firmly resolved to live and die.

" This is a last duty which cannot be denied to the meanest and most abject person that lives: it is a liberty which you grant to all the foreign ambassadors—the exercise of their religion. And even I myself have not heretofore forced my own subjects to any thing contrary to their religion, though I had all power and authority over them. And that I should be deprived in this extremity of such freedom, you cannot in justice require. What

advantage will accrue to you, if you deny it me? I hope that God will forgive me, if, oppressed by you in this manner, I render him no other duty than what I shall be allowed to do in my heart. But you will set a very bad example to the other princes of Christendom, to act towards their subjects with the same rigour that you will show to me, a sovereign queen, and your nearest relation, which I am, and shall be, as long as I live, in spite of my enemies.

"I would not trouble you concerning the increase of my household; about which, for the short time I have to live, I need not care much. I require then from you only two bed-chamber women to attend me during my illness; attesting to you, before God, that they are very necessary to me, now that I am a forlorn creature among these simple people. Grant these to me for God's sake; and show, in this instance, that my enemies have not so much credit with you against me as to exercise their vengeance and cruelty in a point of so little importance, and involving a mere office of humanity.

"I will now come to that with which the Earl of Scherusbery has charged me, if such a one as he can charge me, which is this: that, contrary to my promise made to Beal, and without your knowledge, I have been negotiating with my son, to yield to him my title to the crown of Scotland, when I had obliged myself not to proceed in it but with your advice, by one of my servants, who should be directed by one of yours in their common journey thither. These are, I believe, the very words of the said earl.

"I will tell you upon this, madam, that Beal never had an absolute and unconditional promise from me, but, indeed, continual overtures, by which I cannot be bound, in the state of which the business is, unless the stipulations which I annexed to it are previously executed; and so far as he is from having satisfied me about this, that, on the contrary, I have never had any answer from him, nor heard mention of it since, on his part. And on this point, I well remember, that the Earl of Scherusbery, about Easter last, wishing to draw from me a new confirmation of what I had spoken to the said Beal, I replied to him very fully, that it was only in case the said conditions should be granted, and consequently fulfilled towards me. Both are living to testify this, if they will tell the truth about it. Then, seeing that no answer was made to me, but, on the contrary, that by delays and neglects my enemies continued more licentiously than ever their practices carried on ever since the sojourn of the said Beal with me, in order to thwart my just pretensions in Scotland, so that the effects have been well witnessed there, by these means a door was left open for the ruin of myself

and my son; I took your silence for a refusal, and discharged myself, by express letters, as well to you as to your council, from all that I had treated upon with the said Beal.

" I made you fully privy to what monsieur the king and madame the queen, had written to me, with their own hands, on this business, and I asked your advice upon it, which is yet to come, and on which it was in truth my intention to proceed if you had given it me in time, and you had permitted me to send to my son, assisting me in the overtures which I had proposed to you, in order to establish between the two realms a good amity and perfect intelligence for the future. But to bind myself nakedly to follow your advice before I knew what it would be, and, for the journey of our servants, to put mine under the direction of yours, even in my own country, I was never yet so simple as to think of it.

" Now I refer to your consideration, if you knew of the false game which my enemies in this country have played me in Scotland, to reduce things to the point at which they stand, which of us has proceeded with the greatest sincerity. God judge between them and me, and avert from this island the just punishment of their demerits.

" Take no heed of the intelligence which my traitorous subjects in Scotland may have given you. You will find, and I will maintain it before all the princes of Christendom, that nothing whatever has passed there on my side to your prejudice, or against the welfare and tranquillity of this realm, which I affect not less than any councillor or subject that you have, being more interested in it than any of them.

" There was a negociation for gratifying my son with the title and name of king, and for ensuring as well the said title to him as impunity to the rebels for their past offences, and for replacing every thing in repose and tranquillity for the future, without innovation of any kind whatever. Was this taking away the crown from my son? My enemies, I believe, had no wish whatever that the crown should be secured to him, and are therefore glad that he should keep it by the unlawful violence of traitors, enemies from times of old to all our family. Was this then seeking for justice upon the past offences of the said traitors, which my clemency has always surpassed?

" But an evill conscience can never be assured, carrying its fear continually in its very great trouble within itself. Was it wishing to disturb the repose of the country to grant a mild pardon of every thing past, and to effect a general reconciliation between all our subjccts? This is the point which our enemis in this country

are afraid of, much as they pretend to desire it. What prejudice would be done to you by this? Mark then, and verify, if you please by what other point. I will answer it, upon my honour.

"Ah! will you, madam, suffer yourself to be so blind to the artifices of my enemies, as to establish their unjust pretensions to this crown, after you are gone; nay, perhaps against, yourself? Will you suffer them in your lifetime, and look on, while they are ruining and so cruelly destroying those so nearly connected with you, both in heart and in blood? What advantage and honour can you hope for in allowing them to keep us, my son and me, so long separated, and him and me from you.

"Redeem the old pledges of your good nature; bind your relations to yourself; let me have the satisfaction, before I die, of seeing all matters happily settled between us; that my soul, when released from this body, may not be constrained to make its lamentations to God for the wrongs which you have suffered to be done it here below; but rather than, being happily united to you, it may quit this captivity, to go to him, whom I pray to inspire you favourably upon my very just and more than reasonable complaints and grievances. At Sheffield, this 8th of November, one thousand, five hundred, eighty-two.

"Your very disconsolate nearest kinswoman and affectionate cousin,

"MARY R."

Robert Beale, in answer to this remarkable document, was sent to Sheffield on April 12th, 1583, to confer with the Scottish Queen upon personal instructions from Elizabeth, to take up item by item, her complaints, and to state as reasons for the treatment she was receiving, her crime in the murder of her husband, and her connection with the Ridolfi conspiracy of ten years ago. Mary made a desperate effort to obtain her freedom, even relinquishing her stand for her absolute rights.

Her proposals were:

1. To go to France or Scotland, or to remain in England "in some honourable sort."
2. If a further treaty ensued, it should be with James and her jointly; and that it should be ratified both in France and Scotland.
3. To enter into a perfect league for Elizabeth's

safety, and for the protection of both realms, after Elizabeth's death, from bloodshed and foreign invasion.

4. She desired the Queen's handwriting to enable her more confidently to deal with the Earl of Shrewsbury and Mr. Beale.

After seventeen days spent in discussion on this basis, Beale returned to Court, and suggested to his Queen that more formal negotiations should be instituted. Elizabeth was agreeable to the suggested course, and appointed Shrewsbury and Sir Walter Mildmay as commissioners, with Beale in attendance. Mildmay had scarcely had preliminary conversations with Mary when Elizabeth, pleading that the negotiations had led to misunderstandings in Scotland, thought well to stay the treaty until an envoy had gone to King James to disabuse his mind of suspicion. On June 17th, Mary, accompanied by Shrewsbury and Mildmay, was removed to the earl's seat at Worksop, where she learnt that the negotiations were definitely abandoned owing to the attitude of James's advisers, and the discovery of another conspiracy against the crown and peace of England. This last was the conspiracy which ended in Throckmorton's execution, and the breach of diplomatic relations with Spain.

§6

The Countess of Shrewsbury, who had been antagonistic to Mary since the birth of Arabella Stewart had given her a blood connection with this possible heiress to the throne, had fallen out with her husband, and was seeking a somewhat stupid means of revenging herself upon him and his prisoner. She and her two Cavendish sons began to spread the story that the Queen of Scots had borne two children by Shrewsbury during her imprisonment under his charge. The allegation was quite without foundation, but the fact that it was made by Lady Shrewsbury gave the rumour a currency and credence that was alarming and dangerous. Shrewsbury demanded, on March 20th, 1584, to be given leave to go to Court to clear himself of the base charge of intimacy with his prisoner. Elizabeth, who, at this stage, had no intention of doing anything to

protect her cousin's honour against this slander, had instructions drawn up to Shrewsbury, Sir Ralph Sadler, and Sir Henry Nevill, expressing her intention to release Shrewsbury from the keepership, and to remove Mary to Melbourne Castle, in Derbyshire.

In the following month, William Waad, another clerk of the Council, was sent to Sheffield, and, as a result of his informal conversations with the Scottish Queen, Beale was once more despatched to inform her that Sir Walter Mildmay was to follow him to treat further with her. Mary, her patience with these pretences exhausted, insisted that Mildmay must come with power to conclude as well as to treat, or she would take it as a refusal, and not deal at all, whatever might become of her. Beale reporting this, Elizabeth just allowed the matter to drop.

Mary had, meanwhile, through the French ambassador, been insisting upon action being taken to have the slander of her alleged relations with Shrewsbury repudiated, but had received no satisfaction. Sixteen years of this manner of treatment had already worn Mary down, and this last treacherous support of her enemies infuriated her. She had been forced to suffer accusations of murder and adultery all this time without being granted the simple right of defending herself; her rebels had been assisted and her loyal subjects crushed by Elizabeth's armies and bribes; humiliations had been heaped upon her—but this last blow was intolerably mean and spiteful. The proposal to release Shrewsbury from the keepership must convey to the world at large that the English Queen accepted the slander as true, and was taking this action to prevent a continuance of their relations. For once Mary had it in her power to secure a complete victory over her cousin. The Countess of Shrewsbury, before the birth of Arabella Stewart had awakened her ambition to be a queen's grandmother, had been friendly and gossipy with Mary, and had been less discreet than wise in what she said. She became antagonistic with the coming of this optimistic ambition for the future, and laid herself out to discredit and dishonour the Scottish Queen, her wild intention being to assist in having her removed, as

one of the obstacles between Arabella and the throne. She had, however, given Mary in earlier days ample munitions with which to breach Elizabeth's defences as a virtuous Queen, shocked at her own immorality.

It is a singular and pleasant reflection of the character and quality of Mary Stewart that she had made no attempt to use the slanderous tales, which she embodied in the famous "scandal letter," to defame Elizabeth in the eyes of Europe, in the way that Moray and Elizabeth had used the Casket Letters against herself. Those who affect to be shocked that she should ever have threatened to publish that letter must suffer from an astigmatism of mental vision. The wonder is, not that she threatened to make use of it when she did, but that she refrained from doing so on less desperate occasions. The letter itself is printed in an appendix, and can be read by those who are curious to know the incidents in Elizabeth's private life with which Lady Shrewsbury had acquainted Mary.

A draft of the letter was put into Burghley's hands, with the information that the Scottish Queen proposed to publish it throughout the Courts of Europe unless steps were taken to proceed against the Countess of Shrewsbury and her sons, Charles and William Cavendish. Burghley, realising that, whether the charges it contained were true or not, it was impossible to allow it to be published, took action, and obtained from Lady Shrewsbury and her sons an explicit denial of the truth of the rumour. An obscure person who had been repeating the scandal was also proceeded against and punished. The smugness of those who presume to criticise Mary for threatening to use this means to preserve her honour is nothing less than comic. Mary's first request to Elizabeth and her Council for justice in this matter was dated January 2nd, 1584, and it was not until she had spent ten months repeating this request for fair treatment, that she took the last resort of threatening Elizabeth with a Roland for her Oliver. If she had not made this threat, the innocent Earl of Shrewsbury would have come down to us as yet another of Mary's lovers who never existed as such, and doubtless, genealogical tables of the posterity of their chimerical

children would exist to companion that of the non-existent ancestor of a famous Covenanter, alleged to have been born to George Douglas at the Castle of Lochleven.

Weeks before Mary had obtained satisfaction, Shrewsbury had relinquished his position to Sir Ralph Sadler, after seeing her settled in at Wingfield early in September. In December she was removed to Tutbury, in the custody of Sir Walter Mildmay and John Somers, who were finally succeeded in the charge by Sir Amyas Poulet, in May 1585.

§7

In the autumn of 1584 Mary had learnt of a new move that had been made by Elizabeth and her Council, by which they obviously intended to make an end either of the plots on her behalf, or of her. This was the historic Bond of Association, which undoubtedly originated in the alarm occasioned by the Throckmorton-Guise-Philip plot. Under this bond the signatories, who for their own safety included every nobleman of consequence in England, engaged themselves "to defend the Queen against her enemies, foreign and domestic ; and if violence should be offered to her life, in order to favour the title of *any pretender to the Crown*, they bound themselves never to acknowledge the person or persons by whom or *for whom* such a detestable act should be committed, but vowed to prosecute such person or persons to the death, and to pursue them with the utmost vengeance to their utter ruin and extirpation."

The intention of this strange addendum to the law of high treason was clear enough : it clearly meant that if anyone, whether with Mary's cognisance or not, plotted against the life of Elizabeth with a view to serving the Scottish Queen, the English Council would be legally justified in prosecuting her, *for whom* the plot was alleged to be formulated, to the death. This was precisely the use that was made of the Bond, yet Mary herself begged to be allowed to subscribe to it. She was by no means deceived as to the import of this device upon her position. She wrote to her Paris ambassador from Tutbury, on

January 15th, 1585, bidding him to intimate to all her relatives and friends that they must renounce whatever enterprises might be intended against the English Queen, and to declare to them that she had determined to associate her son in the crown of Scotland, and to transfer to him the administration of its government. Her caution, however, was unavailing, and indeed could not be otherwise. Walsingham had now in his possession, in the Bond of Association, the instrument he needed to fashion his final and successful effort to bring the Queen of Scots to her death. With James's principal ministers, as will appear, playing traitor with Elizabeth, the events that followed had no influence upon the certainty of Mary's doom. They just filled in the time which passed while Walsingham was building up and creating his evidence by which she could be condemned under the Bond, which was embodied in an Act of Parliament in March 1585.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

THE BREWER'S BUNG-HOLE

§I

SIR WALTER MILDMAJ, John Somers, a Clerk of the Council, and Sir Ralph Sadler, all had some share in the warding of the Queen of Scots after the Earl of Shrewsbury relinquished his charge. In each case the appointment was understood to be temporary, pending the selection of a satisfactory permanent keeper. The post was offered to Lord St. John, who was successful in evading it on the ground of ill-health, and it fell to Sir Amyas Poulet to be the man who should co-operate with Sir Francis Walsingham in carrying out the plan that had been made possible by the enactment of the Bond of Association.

Poulet was hereditary Governor of Jersey, and came of an old and noble West-country family. He had been knighted in 1576 as a preliminary to his being sent as Elizabeth's ambassador to France, a position which served as an admirable preparation for his task as Mary's keeper. In France he was anxiously and fussily occupied with investigating the activities of Morgan, the principal agent of the Scottish Queen; and in trying to persuade Elizabeth to purchase the services of certain "honest men"—a euphemism for spies—who were willing to use their gifts and knowledge, indifferent to any other consideration but that their master or mistress must be the highest bidder. He proved himself astute and pertinacious, and it is possible that Morgan might have been captured and extradited, if his Queen could have been persuaded to pay the price that Morgan's accomplices demanded to betray him. This intimacy with the characters, weaknesses and ways of "honest men" proved invaluable to

him as Walsingham's accomplice in the fabrication of the plot which occasioned the execution at Fotheringhay. In religion he was an extreme Puritan, incapable of believing that any Catholic could be sincere. His conception of his duty to his Sovereign permitted his conscience to serve her in any capacity, excepting only that of murderer ; and he was endowed with a temperamental caution which made him hesitate to take any action favourable to his prisoner without express warrant from his superiors. He was able to override this cautiousness when the problem to be decided was to Mary's disadvantage or discomfort, because he was aware that her oppression was the keynote of her treatment, and that excess of zeal in that direction would be tolerated, if not warmly approved.

The first instructions relative to his appointment as Mary's keeper were dated March 4th, but he did not repair immediately to Tutbury Castle to relieve the impatient Sadler of the charge that he resented. A month passed in correspondence consequent upon his demand for more precise instructions, especially as to the quantity and quality of liberty that Mary was to be allowed. He was told that he was to provide for her strict custody, and against "the secret conveyance of her letters and other like practices," and against allowing any stranger to approach the Queen when she was taking the air, "for that heretofore under colour of giving of alms and other extraordinary courses used by her, she hath won the hearts of the people (by) that habit about those places where she hath heretofore lain."

Poulet arrived at Tutbury on April 17th, 1585, and after dinner on the following day had an interview with the Queen, in Sir Ralph Sadler's presence. He informed her of his intention to deal plainly with her, which, answered Mary, "is a thing I love well," and promised to reciprocate in this manner of dealing. He then broached the matter of how her correspondence should be dealt with, whereupon she admitted that, perforce, she had in time past "sought some extraordinary help to convey her letters. Which, sithence I entered into good terms with the Queen, I have utterly forborne";

and turned to Sir Ralph for confirmation of this statement.

The fears that Mary had expressed, that her change of keeper was intended to provide for an increase of rigour in her treatment, were speedily justified. Within ten days of his arrival, Poulet was writing to Court explaining three "rigours" that he had introduced, and defending himself against the complaints which he feared would be made against him on this ground. Under Sadler's régime, Mary's coachman had been allowed to exercise his horses in the neighbourhood, unaccompanied; her cloth of Estate, bearing the arms of France, Lorraine, and Scotland, had been allowed to hang in the dining chamber; and her servants had been permitted to take exercise upon the castle walls. Poulet, observing these things, ordered that the coachman should henceforth be accompanied by some of his servants so that he should be restrained from speech with strangers; he, ignoring Mary's protests against this further diminution of her royal estate, took down the offending cloth, on the ground that no cloth of Estate, except Elizabeth's, had any right to be hung in England; and prohibited the use of the walls as a promenade as "a thing very offensive to all neighbours, and not meet to be endured in reason and judgment." The inoffensive coachman, who had enjoyed the privilege of messing with Sadler's servants, was prohibited the company of Sir Amyas's men, and was ordered to eat alone. Poulet early bethought himself about the matter of alms-giving, and forbade de Préau, who passed as a reader but was, as Poulet guessed, a priest, to pursue his hitherto tolerated habit of a house-to-house distribution of Mary's alms to the needy folk of Tutbury town. He also, on express instructions, opened and read all packets and letters that came to Mary.

A few days after revealing these evidences of his intentions, he had an interview with his prisoner, in which she learnt that the principles of the Bond of Association were already being put into practice. Poulet accused her of responsibility of an assault upon William Waad in France, whither he had gone to effect the extradition of Morgan.

She had replied that she knew nothing of the matter, and that the attacker was a stranger to her. "I answered that he knew her to be his kinswoman," wrote Poulet to Elizabeth, "and was content to give testimony of his good affection towards her by doing wrong to the Queen's Majesty." The implication is clear, that Mary must be held responsible for any action taken by her friends to Elizabeth's detriment.

On May 2nd Poulet wrote to Walsingham : "It may stand me in stead to be acquainted with some part of the French and Scottish doings, which will minister good occasion of talk between this lady and me, whereby somewhat, perchance, may be drawn from her, when she is in her angry mood." This request is important as the first recorded reference to a policy of indirect espionage which was ruthlessly pursued during the whole period of Poulet's charge. Again and again, in the course of it, Poulet is urged by Walsingham and others deliberately to bait the Scottish Queen, to anger and irritate her, in the hope that she may be goaded by passion and resentment to be exasperated out of her usual discretion. Her keeper took a callous delight in this practice, employing it pitilessly, even when Mary was seriously ill.

Walsingham, by a judicious inquiry as to Poulet's judgment regarding the utter sureness of the Queen's custody, drew a satisfactory expression of his attitude towards his responsibility: "As I will not be beholden to traitors for my life . . . so I will be assured by the grace of God that she shall die before me." In plainer terms, he was telling the astute Secretary that he would kill Mary with his own hands rather than allow her to be rescued. Poulet was determined to fulfil his duty, and reduce the risks of escape or rescue to a minimum. Soon after his arrival Mary was confined to her bed for several weeks by illness, and, even when well enough to rise, was so crippled that she could only take the air in her coach, or by being carried in a chair to the garden. On July 5th Poulet wrote: "Her legs are yet weak, and indeed are wrapped up in gross manner, as hath appeared to my wife"; yet, whenever she is beyond the walls, "even in

this state she is accompanied . . . with so many horsemen, all furnished with snaphaunces or cases of pistols, and a good number of harquebusiers on foot with matches lighted, attending on her coach."

On August 11th Poulet delivered letters from Elizabeth to Mary, and four days later she sent for him, and his account of what passed gives so clear an insight into Mary's position that it is quoted verbatim :

" On the 15th of this present, being risen out of her bed, but not able to go, and therefore lying upon a pallet, she sent for me, and at my repair unto her told me that being at the point to take physic, at the very instant of the receipt of her Majesty's letters, she was so much comforted by the same, that she refused her physic and found herself more refreshed by this kindness from the Queen, her good sister, than she should have been by all the ministry of all the physic in the world. She prayed me to excuse her that she had not sent sooner for me, which she said proceeded partly of her infirmity, but especially that she was very willing to write unto her Majesty as soon as she could, and by that occasion to do the like to the French King and some others, wherein she had been busy a day or two. She said that she had always carried a firm and constant opinion of her Majesty's friendly and natural disposition towards her, that for her part she could not cease to honour and respect her as Queen of England, and to love her entirely as her elder sister and nearest ally, that this realm is more dear to her than all other countries whatsoever. And yet she can find no comfort in it because if it be distressed, and feel or fear any calamity, she is also grieved as one that wisheth unto it all happy prosperity. If it flourish in security then she feareth the worse and is the less regarded that she had given herself wholly to her Majesty in all humbleness, in all faithfulness, in all sincerity, in all integrity (I use her own words), and had removed all foreign helps to please her Highness, and thereby to give her to know that she depended wholly of her. That her words had no credit, she was not believed, and her proffers refused when they might have done good. That she hath proffered her heart and body to her Majesty: her body is taken and great care taken for the safe keeping of it, but her heart is refused. That when she sayeth if she were employed she might do good, and when she shall be required hereafter it will be too late, then she is said to boast. When she offcreth herself and service with humbleness, then she is said to flatter. That she felt the smart of every accident that happened to the danger of her

Majesty's person or estate, although she were guiltless in heart and tongue. That if she had desired great liberty, her Majesty might instantly have been jealous of her, but she desired only reasonable liberty for her health. That if the treaty had been proceeded between her Majesty and her, she knoweth that France had now been quiet. That considering the indisposition of her body, she hath no hope of long life, and much less of a pleasant life, having lost the use of her limbs, and is therefore far from the humour of ambition, desiring only to be well accepted where she shall deserve well, and by that mean during her short days to carry a contented and satisfied mind. That it was her calling not to win fame by victories, but would think herself happy if, by her mediation, peace might be entertained in all countries generally, but especially in this realm. That if she had spoken with the King of Navarre his Ambassador at his being here this last winter, she thinketh there had been now good amity between his master and the house of Guise, and did not doubt to have done some good if she had been acquainted with his last being here. That her son is a stranger unto her; but he should be possessed with ambition, he play of both hands and do bad office. That her son did reproach her in his letters that she was shut up in a desert, so as he could not send to her or hear from her, which was the cause that he did help himself by other means the best he could, and was forced so to do. Finally, that although she had been esteemed as nobody, and have determined if her help were hereafter required to be indeed as nobody, and so to answer, yet for the love that she beareth to her Majesty and this realm, she will not refuse to employ her best means if it shall please her Highness to use her service, which she will do, not so much for her own particular as for her Majesty's surety and benefit of this realm."

§2

Mary, who had been intermittently ill ever since coming to Tutbury, had meanwhile been agitating for a change of residence: "I am so badly accommodated in these two little rooms, that I am unable to remain here for the winter without very great hazard of my life." That this was true is confirmed by an extract from one of Poulet's letters to Walsingham: "The indisposition of this Queen's body, and the great infirmity of her legs, which is so desperate as herself doth not hope of any recovery, is no small advantage to her keeper, who shall

not need to stand in great fear of her running away." The question of a change of residence was dealt with in a desultory fashion, and eventually, on Christmas Eve, Mary was removed to Chartley.

During this interval, Chateaucufen succeeded Mauvisière as French ambassador in London, and Walsingham took advantage of this change to inform Mary that, henceforward, she should have no direct communication with the new ambassador, but that all her correspondence with France should pass through his hands. Upon this subject Elizabeth herself wrote to Poulet, giving as cause for the rigour: "that horrible and wicked practice and attempt against our own person, discovered to have been practised by Morgan, a principal and chief servant of hers (Mary's), a matter that so grieved our subjects, as we had much ado to stay them in public Parliament to have called her in question for the same."

This prohibition, and the general extremity of the conditions inflicted upon her, had a deliberate purpose. The letter quoted above clearly reveals Mary's desire to live amicably with Elizabeth and to be accorded more healthy conditions in which to live. Up to his time there is no good evidence that she failed to observe her declared forbearance from secret correspondence, the truth of which Sir Ralph Sadler did not deny. Poulet's policy of trying to draw something incriminating out of her in her angry mood had been singularly unproductive; and consequently Walsingham was being frustrated in his plan by the simple good conduct of his victim. He had even, by this time, bribed Chérelles, a secretary of the French Embassy, to sell him copies of all Mary's letters; and still he had come upon nothing that would make her chargeable under the Bond of Association. He thereupon determined to extend and intensify the practice of his policy of exasperation, to the end that Mary should be so desperately denied all channels of open or privileged communication that she would be driven to seek secret means, and indiscreet courses. He had his "honest men" ready to act upon his instructions, and all that was needed was to provide Mary with a secret means.

The stoppage of direct communication with the French ambassador had the desired psychological effect. Mary's hope died and her patience snapped when she learnt of this decision. As Poulet reports : " She might see plainly that her destruction was sought, and that her life shall be taken from her one of these days, and then it shall be said that she was sickly, and that she died of some sickness. . . . Therefore now looking for no other than all extremity, she would not fail to urge her enemies to do the worst they could. . . . I think the care of my charge greatly increased," he adds, " by reason of this Queen's discontentment, because it is likely that now she will employ her best means to renew her practices, as well by letters as other ways."

Walsingham must have read this ingenuous letter with relish. He had not yet acquainted the blunt Sir Amyas with the design which he was perfecting. He decided that it would be best to defer putting it into practice until the proposed removal to Chartley had been accomplished, and so avoid any interruption of its sinister course.

So, shut away from the world and all news except that which he allowed her to receive, the Scottish Queen spent the last three months of the year 1585 in uneventful illness and despair.

§3

Less than a year after the Bond of Association had been enacted, Sir Francis Walsingham had purchased and assembled the *dramatis personæ* who were to be used to bring it into effective operation against the doomed Queen of Scots. The most important of these was a professional spy, named Gilbert Gifford, who, during the summer of 1585, visited Morgan, who was at this time a prisoner in the Bastille. This man, who had been trained for the Catholic priesthood, was astute enough to impose himself upon Mary's agent to the point of persuading him to give him a letter of credentials to Mary, describing him as a Catholic, well-born, who had " offered to do me all the friendly offices that he may do. . . . The said Gilbert Gifford is instructed how to send your letters to my hand

to these parts." Gifford also deceived the Archbishop of Glasgow, Mary's ambassador in France, and obtained a recommendation from him. He was associated in France at this time with a secondary spy, named Poley; a forger and decipherer, named Phelippes, and with Anthony Babington, who, as a boy, had been a page to Mary while she was in the Earl of Shrewsbury's charge. Morgan and Lord Paget—who was in exile as a result of his complicity in the Throckmorton plot—both recommended these three men to Mary as able and willing to serve her. Gifford, who was one of Walsingham's "honest men," returned to England in December 1585, and took up his abode in Phelippes' house in London, and spent his time in worming his way further into the confidence of Babington and other Catholic friends of his.

Phelippes left London and arrived at Chartley almost on the same day as Mary, who had received a letter from Morgan telling her that a man of that name might get into touch with her, and warning her to try him in small matters before reposing any real trust in him. Mary and her servants gave him opportunities to declare himself while he was there, and evidently Poulet was content to let them try. Phelippes, who appears to have been known to Poulet "of old acquaintance," left Chartley after a stay of three weeks, without giving Mary any sign that he wished employment by her. The purpose of his visit is only to be conjectured, but he was evidently sent with very confidential recommendation from Walsingham, to whom Poulet did not hesitate to write, on January 10th, 1585-6, "Mr. Phelippes hath assisted me in perusing this Queen's packet." Phelippes' visit, at this particular date, suggests that Walsingham had only been waiting for Mary's removal to put his plot into operation. During those three weeks Poulet almost certainly received verbally from the decipherer, Walsingham's instructions for giving effect to the facilities that were to be provided for Mary's "secret" correspondence.

Morgan, in his letter about Gifford, explained that the spy had an uncle within ten miles of Tutbury, and other

kinsmen, who were well disposed towards the Scottish Queen. He knew the whole district well, and made the acquaintance of the brewer of Burton who had supplied the Queen's household at Tutbury with beer, and who continued to do so at Chartley. The brewer was a man whose self-interest was his only concern, and he agreed, at his price, to fall in with the plan which Gifford propounded to him. His part, Gifford explained, was to let the imprisoned Queen know, by a message from Gifford, that she could safely send letters through him, by an ingenious device. The beer was delivered weekly in barrels, and, when the barrels were empty and ready to be returned, she was to insert her letters and messages through the bung-hole. They were to be extracted on arrival at the brewer's house, which—probably not by coincidence—was that of the forfeited Lord Paget; and the brewer would deliver the letters to Gifford to forward them to their destination.

The brewer, incidentally, did very well financially by his venture, being liberally paid both by Gifford, on behalf of Walsingham, and by the deceived Queen. Further than this, he determined to extort an excessive price for his beer, for we find Poulet complaining to Walsingham: “It seemeth that the honest man is persuaded that I cannot spare his service . . . having of late required an increase for his beer in unreasonable sort.” Another extract throws an amusing light upon the reaction of the brewer to being party to political conspiracy: “The honest man playeth the harlot with these people egregiously. He appointeth all places of meeting at his pleasure, wherein he must be obliged, and hath no other respect than that he may not ride out of his way, or at least that his travel for this cause may not hinder his own particular business.”

The Queen, with all other means of private correspondence jealously denied her, did not hesitate to avail herself of the means so ingeniously provided by Gifford, the man whom she trusted implicitly because Morgan and her ambassador in France had so warmly recommended him. The opportunity must have been given her early

in the year, for on March 2nd Poulet writes to Walsingham, on the subject of the mysterious request of her physician, her coachman and two laundresses to be discharged from her service : " I would suspect (this wish) to be grounded upon great cunning, if I did not know that they were already provided of sufficient means to perform all the treacheries that they can devise."

Gifford, who was sometimes assisted by a man named Barnes, carried out the letter of his undertaking to Mary, and forwarded her letters to her correspondents. He also arranged that their replies should reach her as promptly as the circumstances allowed. He was in the confidence, not only of the Queen, Morgan, and Mary's French ambassador, but of Babington, and Mendoza, the Spanish ambassador who had been ordered to leave the country, and who was willing to support the plotters for Mary's release out of a desire for revenge upon Elizabeth and her ministers for his humiliation.

The course that was adopted when the Scottish Queen's letters were handed over by the brewer was simple enough. They were taken by trusty messengers to Phelippes, who deciphered or copied them, sent the deciphers and copies to Walsingham, and handed the originals back to be sent on to their destinations. A similar treatment was given to all intercepted correspondence to Mary ; so that Walsingham had copies of every letter that she wrote and received. Further than this, as Mary's confidential agent, he was instructed to receive from the French ambassador in London packets of confidential letters which had been accumulating for two years, because the ambassador had been unable to forward them by any such secret means as Gifford now offered. These packets were bulky and numerous, and could only be deciphered piecemeal by Phelippes ; so the packets were divided and forwarded when his work upon each section was completed. Even with all these facilities for entrapping the unsuspecting Queen, nothing sufficiently incriminating came into Walsingham's hands to enable him to put into motion the machinery of the Bond.

Gifford, from April to July, was frequently in Paris—posing as Mary's man—conspiring on her behalf with Mendoza for Spanish help for a bold scheme for revolt, invasion and regicide, which ultimately took its final form in the Babington plot. The Spaniard, for personal reasons of vengeance upon Elizabeth, was enthusiastic in his support, and pledged Philip to give much more support than that cautious monarch was likely to give. Gifford was probably fully conscious of the motives actuating the ambassador, but it was a matter of indifference to him whether the Spanish help would be forthcoming or not. The promises, passed on to Babington, served his purpose, but emboldening that romantic young man and his friends to expedite the preparation of the plot for the assassination of Elizabeth, the liberation of Mary, and a Catholic rising on her behalf.

The plot developed with a swiftness and boldness that seem to have aroused the suspicion of some of the Catholic gentlemen who had promised their support when the hour for the armed rising should strike. On July 11th, Gifford wrote to Walsingham that he had met a priest, named Ballard, one of Morgan's agents in the plot, who had told him that, for the reassurance of these doubtful ones, it was essential to obtain of the Queen "her hand and seal to allow all that should be practised for her behalf. Without the which," said Ballard, "we labour in vain, and these men will not hear us." Gifford, explaining to the other that it was practically impossible to obtain so far-reaching an authority, asked him what assurance he could give to Mary to persuade her to grant it. "I will undertake," replied Ballard, "within forty days to procure his (her?) liberty."

On the same day that Gifford was informing Walsingham of these matters, the Secretary was writing to Poulet, and enclosing Babington's letter, outlining the whole plot, to be delivered to Mary. This crucial letter had, of course, been intercepted by Walsingham and deciphered by Phelipps, and the Queen's reply to it also reached his hands, by way of the accommodating brewer.

Phelipps in a letter to Walsingham, dated July 19th,

1586, writes : " You have now this Queen's answer to Babington which I received yesternight. If he be in the country the original will be conveyed into his hands, and like enough an answer returned. I look for your honour's speedy resolution touching his apprehension or otherwise, that I may dispose of myself accordingly." He goes on to hope that Elizabeth " will hang Nau and Curle,"—Mary's two secretaries—and refers to Poulet, " being wonderfully comforted with these discoveries." Boldly interpreted, his letter expresses the view that nothing further is needed to bring Mary to the block. He had even had the jubilant indiscretion to draw a picture of the gallows on the cover of his copy of Mary's letter, when he sent it to Walsingham.

§4

The decipherer's view of the matter evidently was that, Mary having received Babington's letter, which pronounced as part of his plot the assassination of Elizabeth, and she not having explicitly commanded, in her reply, that that part should be abandoned, she was clearly chargeable under the Bond of Association. His judgment would appear, in view of the wording of that document, to have been justified. Walsingham, however, was evidently hesitant about bringing her to the scaffold on the ground that the plot for the assassination was only " for her "; he wanted it to be " by her " as well. This seems to be the only conclusion that can be reasonably reached by a close examination of the document which is alleged to be a true copy of the letter from Mary to Babington, on which the charge against her was mainly founded. The proof that this letter was subjected to interpolations which were calculated deliberately to make Mary an active party to the assassination plot appears to be incontrovertible. This statement is grounded upon the existence of two contradictions in the letter as it has survived.

1. In one part of the letter Mary is made to write, that she wished to be rescued from her prison after the assassination of Elizabeth had been accomplished, and that four

messengers should be sent by different roads to inform her immediately that design had been accomplished.

" Les choses estant ainsy préparées et les forces, tant dedans que dehors le royaume, toutes prestes, il faudra alors mettre les six gentilshommes en besoigne et donner ordre que leur desseing estant effectué je puisse, quant et quant, estre tirée hors d'icy, et que toutes voz forces soynt et ung mesmes temps en campagne pour me recevoir pendant qu'on attendra le secours estranger, qu'il faudra alors haster en toute dilligence. Or, d'autant qu'on ne peult constituer ung jour prefix pour l'accomplissement de ce que lesdicts gentilshommes ont entreprins, je vouldrois qu'ils eussent toujours auprès d'eulx ou pour le moings en cour, quatre vaillans hommes bien montes pour donner avis en toute dilligence du succez dudit desseing, aussytost qu'il sera effectué, a ceulx qui auront charge de me tirer hors d'icy, afin de s'y pouvoix transporter avant que mon gardien soyt advertis la ladict execution ; ou, a tout le moings, avant qu'il ayt le loisir de se fortifier dedans la maison, ou de me mener ailleurs. Il seroyt nécessaire qu'on envoyast deux ou trois de dicts advertisseurs par divers chemins, afin que l'ung mesme instant essayer d'empecher les passages ordinaires aux postes et courriers."

This passage clearly states that the writer wishes the assassination to be accomplished, and herself informed by messenger of its success, before she is liberated.

2. In the next paragraph the Queen's instructions are to quite contrary effect. She advises against action being taken to effect her liberation until the rescuers are in sufficient force to be able to put her in a secure place : " ne seroyt que donner asses d'occasion à ceste Royne là, si elle me prenoyt de rechef, de m'enclorre en quelque fosse d'où je ne pourrais jamais sortir, si pour le moings, j'en pouvois eschaper à ce prix là, et de persécuter avecq toute extremité ceux qui m'auroynt assisté, dont j'auroys plus de regret que d'adversité quelconque qui ne pourroyt echoir à moy mesmes."

It is clear that Mary could not have instructed Babington, at one and the same time, to assassinate Elizabeth

before attempting to rescue herself, and also to make no attempt to effect her liberation until he had sufficient forces at his call to prevent Elizabeth from recapturing her. Yet these two contradictory instructions are included in the letter, a copy of which was used as evidence of her complicity in the murder plot. So far as this exhibit is concerned, nothing can be proved against Mary, since it is obvious on the face of it that it cannot be a true copy of what she wrote. Prince Labanoff has made an ingenious and convincing essay to prove precisely what were the contents of the letter that Mary actually wrote to Babington, but it does not appear that any confirmation of the fact of interpolations is needed, in face of the manifest contradiction contained in the surviving text.

There is no room for doubt but that Babington, in his letter to Mary, informed her that Elizabeth's assassination was contemplated as part of the general plot, and it is to be supposed that Mary did not express any assent or objection to it. This latter fact is curious, since she dealt with all the other points mentioned by Babington; yet it is hardly reasonable to assume that the manifest garbling of her letter may have been carried further, to the point of suppressing, in the copy, any objection to the assassination that the original may have contained. Mary only maintained, at her examination, that she had not conspired to that end, and demanded to be shown any writings in her handwriting which would prove the contrary. She did not state that she had explicitly countermanded the assassination promulgated by Babington. Nevertheless, the second part of the letter quoted above goes to prove that Mary implicitly forbade the assassination, since in it she expressed keen anxiety lest Elizabeth should recapture her if Babington's forces were not powerful enough to ensure her perfect security. It must surely seem strange, almost inexplicable, that Walsingham should have approved such a manifest and clumsy fabrication as the alleged copy of Mary's letter; yet there it is, existing to prove the quality of honesty that was practised to bring Mary to the scaffold.

Other minor points have been discovered that confirm

the theory that interpolations were added to this letter, such as Nau's failure, under interrogation, to make any reference to the six gentlemen or assassination, although he mentioned other lesser points in the letter as of supreme importance. It is proposed, however, to maintain that the existence of the major contradiction is conclusive evidence that the copy of the letter put in as sworn evidence did not coincide with the original written by Mary.

It is relevant to mention that Mendoza, in a letter to Philip II, expressed the opinion that this was not the first occasion upon which Walsingham and Burghley had forged letters, and that, having Mary's ciphers in their hands, they could insert at will passages inculpating her. Burghley, writing on the concluding day of the "trial" at Fotheringhay, reported to Secretary Davison that Mary maintained "that the points of the letters that concerned the practice against the Queen's Majesty were never by her written, nor of her knowledge; the rest, for invasion, for escaping by force, she said she would neither deny nor affirm." It may be remembered, in connection with this point, that Mary had written to the Archbishop of Glasgow, as a result of the Bond of Association, bidding him to intimate to all her relatives and friends that they must renounce whatever enterprises might be intended against the English Queen. The case can be shortly and confidently stated, that the evidence that lost Mary her life was as dubious as that which Moray produced to soil her personal honour.

Phelippes, it has been shown, was anxious "to dispose of himself" on July 19th; and Gifford shared a kindred anxiety. Gifford, who was technically guilty of complicity in the Babington plot, was beyond even Walsingham's power to safeguard, and judiciously made his escape to France on July 21st, where he resumed his religious vocation and was ordained a priest at Rheims: he had been a deacon as well as a spy.

The discovery of the plot—every move in which had been known to Walsingham since its obscure inception—was now officially made. Barnewell, and Savage,

accomplices of Babington, were arrested with him. On August 16th, Mary was removed temporarily from Chartley to Tixall, and her two secretaries, Nau and Curle, were arrested and taken to London, to help betray their generous mistress, under the threat of torture and death.

CHAPTER TWELVE

THE SON OF MARY

MARY'S son, James, was the victim of the circumstances of his life and training. He had not even a child's sentimental memory of her, for he had been separated from her when he was only a year old. He had grown up uncertain whether she had murdered his father, and uncertain also whether Darnley was his father in anything but name. His mother's enemies had let it get to his ears that he was probably "an Italian fiddler's son." He had been familiarised with the whole mean scandal of the Bothwell episode, and everything that could be done to alienate his goodwill and affections from Mary had been done through infancy, childhood, and youth. She was to him a woman of doubtful character, accused of vile crimes, the guilt of which she had never been allowed to disprove. Thus, it was not surprising that he should lack strong filial ties to her and her cause; and he happened to be constitutionally incapable of becoming any woman's knight—which he declared himself to be, for her, on receiving a jewelled sword from her as a present. He was content to occupy her throne, and allow her to remain in prison where she could not dispute his possession with anything more dangerous than words and futile plots. Some young men, on reaching a proper age, and freedom from the domination of counsellors, knowing their mother to be in such an unhappy position, might have felt it a duty to make her liberation one of the main objects of their life. James was not afflicted by any such sense of duty. He was more concerned to modify the arrogance of the new Kirk and its

preachers, and to strengthen his position as King of Scotland.

James had the same quality of personnel in the way of nobles to deal with as his mother had had, and he was the pawn of factions during all the years that his mother was a prisoner. They were as traitorous to him as they had been to her, and those whom he employed as advisers were even less tender in solicitude for her and her rights than he was himself. There were occasional unreal negotiations for an association of the crown between him and her, but he never intended that they should come to an issue. She might plead and threaten to prevent him entering into a treaty with France, or with Elizabeth, except in conjunction with her, but he went his own way, ignoring her. He never made a single direct effort on his mother's behalf, until the discovery of the Babington plot made her danger acute.

A few weeks before the disclosure of the plot was made, James entered into a league with Elizabeth, in which both parties undertook to maintain the Reformed religion, to refrain from aiding any foreign Power that attacked the other, and to give each other armed help in the event of either being invaded; neither should countenance or harbour the rebels of the other.

James received a pension of £4000 per annum.

He had thus fairly sold himself to his mother's gaoler, and he expressed himself as delighted at the discovery of Mary's conspiracy, though he had the grace to hold the opinion "that it cannot stand with his honour that he be a concerer to take his mother's life, but he is content how strictly she be kept, and all her knavish servants hanged."

Elizabeth sent him a present of some horses.

He seems to have been satisfied that Elizabeth should now have good new cause to keep Mary strict prisoner in perpetuity, but he could not consent to her death. When Lord John Hamilton and George Douglas (who had effected Mary's escape from Lochleven) warned him of his dishonour if Elizabeth did slay Mary, he complained of his mother's injuries to himself, and insisted that

the best course was that she should be strictly confined.

James's favourite counsellor at this time was the Master of Gray, an uncommonly handsome Catholic, who had been Mary's confidential agent in Paris, and who had come to Scotland in the spring of 1584, in connection with the Guise-Spanish plot, in which James had affected an interest. He had changed his plan of campaign on discovering the state of affairs in Scotland, and had been steadily betraying Mary's secrets and interests. He was prepared to betray anyone who stood in the way of his own interests, but according to Andrew Lang, had a brief attack of honesty as a result of the death of his great friend, Sir Philip Sidney.

The Master was much embarrassed by the necessity of having to take James's orders when that young man began to make some efforts to save his mother's life. He wrote to Archibald Douglas, a base traitor and James's ambassador in London, on October 11th, 1586 :

"The King's Majesty hath commanded me to write to you very earnestly to deal for his mother's life, and I see, if it cannot be done by you, he minds to take the matter very highly. All this I take, as God judge me, to proceed from his own good nature, and to have no other matter secret, and, therefore, do what we can to avoid wrong constructions. This is a hard matter to speak truly, not to make any mediation for his mother; and yet the matter is also hard on the other side for you and me, although we might do her good to do it; for I know, as God liveth, it shall be a staff for our own heads; yet I write to you as he has commanded me, to deal very instantly for her; but if matters might stand well between the Queen's Majesty there and our Sovereign, *I care not although she were out of the way.* . . . His Majesty has written to me that if ye receive not a good answer at this time touching his mother he will send me, but I will make no answer till himself come here (Dumfries) which will be on Thursday next. I will be very loath to enterprise any such commission."

Writhe as he might in prospect of this mission from James to Elizabeth, he was unable to escape it, and when it was finally decided that he must go to London, he wrote to Douglas that he must accept it or be ruined :

" But to answer to the Queen therc, and all my honourable friends, that they shall find me always constant ; and that in my negotiation I shall know nothing but for their contentments."

Such was the heart and integrity of the man whom James sent to plead with Elizabeth for Mary's life. The Scottish King also wrote a stern letter to Elizabeth, sending it by Keith. This man and Archibald Douglas, in delivering the letter, apologised to Cecil for its tone, explaining that it was a necessity to which the King was forced by the insistence of his subjects. Keith, Douglas, and Gray all betrayed Mary's interests, and though they fulfilled their mission to plead with the English Queen for her life, the quality of their pleading is apparent from their words and actions.

Andrew Lang makes out a case that Gray did fulfil his mission honestly, and incurred the enmity of Leicester and others who had previously been his friends, by the strength of his advocacy. Lang's argument is that the Master of Gray was temporarily purged by his grief for the loss of Sir Philip Sidney ; yet the letter quoted in the previous paragraph was written more than a month after he had been lamenting his friend's death. The attitude of double-dealing expressed in that letter harmonises with that revealed by his writings previous to the death of Sidney, and it was obviously easy for him—after the explanation that Douglas had given to Elizabeth and her ministers before he arrived on his mission—to plead verbally with vigour to save his face, knowing all the time that no real attention would be paid to his protests. His mission was, in any case, of no effect, Elizabeth going her own way in spite of mission and stern letters from James. It is reported that Gray confessed at his trial in May 1587 that he had advised her to take Mary's life in a private way, rather than with a form of justice. In spite of Andrew Lang's chivalrous attempt to wash away this final stain of treachery towards Mary, the Master of Gray was a traitor to her to the end.

James passed an Act in Council that the clergy should pray for the illumination of his mother's soul, and for the

preservation of her body. Sir Henry Widdington wrote from Scotland to Walsingham : "The nobility of Scotland are summoned, and have general warning to be on Saturday next at Edinburgh to convene in counsel with the King, beginning on Monday next, and are to continue three days in counsel, which is to conclude with the general consent, that if the Queen of Scots be put to death, the King will give up the peace with her Majesty, and make war upon England."

Elizabeth and her ministers knew their James, who could be seduced from manhood with bloodhounds, horses, and pensions, and were not to be stampeded from their settled course by any threats of war from him.

Trained by traitors, served by traitors, bred up to hate his mother, jealous of the power that was potentially hers to assume the crown that had been transferred from hers to his infant head, it is, perhaps, not to be wondered at that James, though he authorised the translation of the Holy Bible, refrained from striking a blow to save his mother from the headsman's axe.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

FARCE AT FOTHERINGHAY

§1

EIGHTEEN years of perilous and increasingly rigorous imprisonment had broken Mary's health, but had left her mental and spiritual powers unaffected and her humanity unsoured. Time and again despair had overwhelmed her as effort after effort for her liberty had been frustrated, but always hope had revived. Treachery, insult and humiliation had been her common lot, with short intervals of deceitful friendliness from Elizabeth, and now, at a long last, she seemed to have outwitted her enemy, and deliverance was at hand. The brewer's ingenious device was unsuspected by Poulet, and she was able at last to carry on her correspondence with her friends without danger or interruption. The help of Spain, so long illusory, was now real and assured, and the Catholics of England were ready to rise to enforce her restoration and that of the true Faith. Hope and exultation had their usual effect upon her health during those exciting summer months, and she was able to indulge the horse exercise she loved. August came bright with imminent promise, and no cloud of suspicion was visible anywhere. Her keeper was strict but unsuspecting, and, on the fifteenth of the month, gave her an indication that the rigour of her treatment was to be lessened. He had arranged, he told her, that she and such of her company as wished to join, should ride over to Sir William Aston's house, a few miles distant, to take part in a buck hunt, on the following day.

The grim Sir Amyas must have been callously entertained to witness the delighted excitement of the Queen and her train when they came out to mount their horses.

Nau, Curle, Melville, Bourgoing, Bastian and Annibal had all decked themselves in their finest attire to do honour to their royal mistress, whose mood was so bright at the prospect of passing beyond the prescribed two-mile limit, and meeting with good company in such pleasant conditions for the first time since she had crossed the Solway.

In high spirits the little cavalcade moved off, and, after riding a mile or two, Nau called Mary's attention to the fact that Sir Amyas was some distance in the rear. The Queen dismissed the circumstance lightly, reminding her secretary that her keeper's gout compelled him to take exercise cautiously, and gave herself up entirely to enjoyment of this unexpected holiday. The sound of hoof-beats overtaking her caused her to turn to see who was approaching, and she discovered that Sir Amyas had mended his pace and was accompanied by a strange gentleman. They came alongside, and the Queen pulled up her horse, to receive the stranger, whom Sir Amyas evidently wished to introduce at once. He named him as Sir Thomas Gorges, one of the English Queen's gentlemen pensioners, who had a message to deliver to her from Elizabeth. Whatever hopeful expectation Mary may have felt at the arrival of a message on such a happy occasion, was instantly turned to apprehension when Sir Thomas dismounted and began to speak without preamble.

"Madame, the Queen, my mistress," he began, "finds it very strange that you, contrary to the pact and engagement made between you, should have conspired against her and her State, a thing which she could not have believed had she not seen proofs of it with her own eyes and known it for certain. And because she knows that some of your servants are guilty, and charged with this, you will not take it ill if they are separated from you. Sir Amyas will tell you the rest."

Taken violently unawares as she was, the Queen's presence of mind, which never deserted her in crises, met the shock imperturbably. She showed no sign of dread or guilt, but, thanking Sir Thomas for the message, blandly answered him that she had never thought of such

things, and much less wished to undertake them ; and that, from whatever quarter Elizabeth had learnt her information, she had been misled, as she had always shown herself her good sister and friend.

Nau and Curle, consternated and doubtless certain that they were among the servants to be separated from her, made as if to ride closer as their mistress ceased speaking ; but their bridles were seized by Sir Amyas's guard, and they were led away. They had seen their mistress for the last time. Melville, her faithful steward, was also seized and removed ; and Sir Amyas, making it clear that the project of the hunt was a ruse, bade the Queen and her remaining attendants follow him.

Mary, stunned by the suddenness of this new calamity, rode on in silence, until Bourgoing, her physician, who was riding beside her, remarked that they were no longer on the road to Chartley. Alarmed, Mary called to Sir Amyas, who was riding ahead, and asked him where they were going. He reined in his horse until she was level with him and informed his charge that they were not returning to Chartley.

The threat behind this news of a change of prison, coming so soon after the shock of Sir Thomas Gorges' speech, proved too much for the Queen's physical frailty. She slipped from the saddle and sat down on the ground, disconsolate. In reply to her demand to know where they were going, Sir Amyas simply told her that she was being taken to a much finer place than Chartley, and added, exasperatedly, that it was useless for her to resist or to remain there on the ground.

Mary realised that the removal from Chartley meant the loss of her only means of communicating privately with her friends. At this time she did not know for certain that the Babington conspiracy had been discovered ; and the thought that all her new hopes were to be destroyed by her removal drove her to desperation. She answered her keeper that she would prefer to die where she was, whereupon he told her plainly that, if she would not move of her own accord, he would send for her coach and have her removed in it by force. Her conduct was

pathetically that of a stubborn and desperate woman who meant literally what she said : that she would prefer to die there and then, rather than face again the weary and humiliating continuance of hopeless imprisonment.

Bourgoing added his tearful pleading to Sir Amyas's brusque annoyance, and at last the Queen was persuaded to submit to the inevitable. First, however, she asked her faithful servant to give her his arm as far as a wayside tree, at the foot of which she sank on to her knees, in view of her keeper and his soldiers, and—to quote Bourgoing's words—" made her prayer to God, begging Him to have pity on her people and on those who worked for her, asking pardon for her faults, which she acknowledged to be great and to merit chastisement. She begged Him to remember His servant David, to whom He had extended His mercy, and whom He had delivered from his enemies, imploring Him to extend also His pity to her, though she was of use to no one, and to do with her according to His will, declaring that she desired nothing in this world, neither goods, honours, powers, nor worldly sovereignty, but only the honour of His holy name and His glory, and the liberty of His Church and of the Christian people ; ending by offering Him her heart, saying that He knew well what were her desires and intentions."

In the mood of despairing resignation, which her prayer expressed, Mary remounted and proceeded to her temporary prison at Tixall, being deprived of two other attendants—Lawrence and Bess Pierrepont—*en route*. During the evening after her arrival, she asked leave to write to Elizabeth, a request that Poulet had no hesitation in refusing, since he had heard the keynote to Mary's future treatment struck in a personal letter from his Queen, who bade him " let your wicked murderer know how with hearty sorrow her vile deserts compelleth these orders ; and bid her from me ask God forgiveness for her treacherous dealings towards the saver of her life many a year, to the intolerable peril of her own ; and yet, not contented with so many forgivenesses, must fall again so horribly, far passing a woman's thought, much less a prince's."

§2

The stay at Tixall was designed to continue only so long as was needed for William Waad to search the apartments of Mary and her company at Chartley, and seize all correspondence and writings that were to be found; and, this being done, she was returned to Chartley on August 25th. Her first action on arriving, before even passing to her own suite, illuminates her whole character. Poulet writes: "She visited Curle's wife (who was delivered of child in her absence) before she went to her own chamber, willing her to be of good comfort, and that she would answer for her husband in all things that might be objected to against him." Learning that the infant had not been baptized, she asked—de Préau having been removed—that Poulet should send for a Protestant minister to perform this office; "which being refused," the account continues, "she came shortly after into Curle's wife's chamber, where laying the child on her knees, she took water out of a basin, and casting it upon the face of the child, she said, 'I baptize thee in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost,' calling the child by her own name, Mary. This may not be found strange in her who maketh no conscience to break all laws of God and man."

Sir Amyas was mistaken in his condemnation of this exquisite act of humanity, since any professing Christian is entitled, by the laws of God and man, to baptize a child if an ordained priest cannot be obtained. The incident throws, rather, a clear light upon the religion which this stern Puritan practised, in that he refused to send even for a Protestant priest when the Queen requested one to do this office for the innocent babe.

Mary then went towards her own rooms, which were opened by Mr. Darrell, Poulet's assistant, and discovered in angry dismay that all her papers had been removed. She turned to Darrell and those who were with him "and said, in great choler, that two things could not be taken from her, her English blood and her Catholic religion,

which both she would keep until her death." There was, however, another thing that could be taken away from her, in order to cripple still further any desperate attempts that she might contemplate for escape or rescue.

A fortnight after her return to Chartley, while preparations were already going forward for her transfer to Fotheringhay Castle, Sir Amyas was ordered to seize all her money, and any that were to be found in Nau's and Curle's coffers. He entered the Queen's bedroom, where she was lying ill, "troubled after the old manner with a defluxion," and "advised her to deliver the said money with quietness." Mary refused his advice, whereupon he turned her people out of the room, and called in his armed servants to break open her coffers. This threat of violence was effective and, according to Bourgoing, who was allowed as her physician to remain in the doorway, Mary "rose from her bed, crippled as she was, and without slipper or shoe followed them, dragging herself as well as she could to her cabinet." Poulet found some hundreds of pounds, and also a bag containing *three pounds* in silver, "which bag of silver was left with her, affirming that she had no more money in this house, and that she was indebted to her servants for their wages."

It is, perhaps, ingenuous to expect to discover any hint of courtesy or chivalry in the keeper who had recently read in a letter from Walsingham, "we are now here in consultation to have her brought directly to the Tower, as a thing which is thought necessary, and afterwards proceeded against according to the Statute made in the last Parliament." This reference to the Statute is interesting as proving beyond question that the precise purpose of the Bond of Association was to provide a certain means of executing the Queen of Scots, because there was no honest law in existence by which this end could be compassed. The device is hardly less transparent than that by which Pride's Purge enabled the rebels to give a semblance of legality to the murder of her grandson in Whitehall.

The purpose to house the doomed Queen in the Tower of London was, for undisclosed reasons, abandoned ; and

on September 21st she was carried out of Chartley and placed in a coach, to be taken to Fotheringhay. At the end of the first day's journey she sent for Sir Thomas Gorges, who had arrived to accompany her on the journey, to hear the message from Elizabeth which, she was informed, he had been sent to deliver. The message proved to be practically identical with the one that he had conveyed when he had interrupted the ride to the buck hunt; but during the conversation that ensued he said : " My mistress knows well that if your Majesty were sent to Scotland, you would not be in safety ; your subjects there would do you an ill turn ; and she would have been esteemed a fool had she sent you to France without any reason."

Mary, drawing the talk from this digression, persisted to him in her denial of any thought or intention against Elizabeth's life, and admitted that, being in captivity and without help, she had, perforce, had to trust to the help and mercy of such as were willing to aid her, and maintained that she was neither privy to nor responsible for their designs. Did Sir Thomas know that the Bond of Association made her responsible for the designs of everyone acting in her aid and interest?

During the four days' journey Mary was kept in ignorance of her destination, and knew that it was to be Fotheringhay only when she reached the Castle. She was lodged in meaner accommodation than she had been accustomed to, though she observed that there were many larger furnished chambers, unoccupied, than those which had been assigned to her. The majority of her attendants and servants had been left behind at Chartley. She discussed her situation with those who had been allowed to accompany her, and revealed to them her certainty that she had been brought there for her trial. " She was not in the least moved," writes Bourgoing ; " on the contrary, her courage rose, and she was more cheerful and in better health than before."

A week after her arrival in her last prison, Poulet came to Mary to acquaint her with Elizabeth's surprise at hearing from Gorges that she had dared to deny the

charges brought against her, and that it had been decided to send Lords and councillors to examine her. He made a clumsy attempt to persuade her to confess her guilt, rather than be found guilty by law. Mary treated this proposal laughingly, telling Poulet that he reminded her of the way in which children were bribed to confess. "As a sinner," she continued seriously, "I am truly conscious of having often offended my Creator, and I beg Him to forgive me, but as Queen and Sovereign I am aware of no fault or offence for which I have to render account to any one here below, as I recognise no authority but God and His Church. As therefore I could not offend, I do not wish for pardon; I do not seek, nor would I accept it from anyone living."

It may be observed that Elizabeth's astonishment at Mary's denials, and Mary's surprise at the certainty of her guilt that Elizabeth expressed, both arose from the same cause. Neither Queen knew that the copy of the letter to Babington, upon which the charge of complicity in assassination rested, had been garbled by Phelipps and Walsingham.

§3

Queen Elizabeth, learning that Mary not only refused to confess to having plotted her assassination, but had the temerity to renew her denial of any knowledge of such a thing, decided to go ahead with her design to have her declared guilty. She appointed forty-eight Commissioners to proceed to Fotheringhay Castle for the purpose of examining the Scottish Queen, upon a Commission that was prepared to give a semblance of legality to the sentence of death, which, as her prisoner did not fail to observe, was already decided upon. The Earl of Shrewsbury, lately her gaoler, and eight or nine other gentlemen, who were named to take part in the proceedings, refused to attend, a stand the daring of which proves the existence of a strong distaste of the proceedings among a considerable section of the nobility. There must have existed some very powerful deterrent to prevent any but the boldest from refusing this Commission, for, among those

who did attend were several Lords who had themselves been implicated in the Babington conspiracy. A sufficient number—about forty—accepted the duty that was thrust upon them to ensure that Elizabeth should be able to announce that Mary had been condemned by her unanimous nobility.

The flock of Commissioners arrived at Fotheringhay on October 11th, and took up their quarters in the Castle or in neighbouring houses. The Archbishop of Canterbury, who had called urgently for Mary's execution after the massacre of St. Bartholomew's Eve, headed the list inscribed on the Commission, to prove how impartial and unprejudiced the judges were to be. Lord Burghley, who had never forgiven Mary for refusing to ratify his clever Treaty of Edinburgh, was another; the Earl of Leicester, once offered to her in marriage in the distant days of her first widowhood, and for years his Queen's favourite lover, another; the Earl of Warwick, his brother, whom Elizabeth had once thought might do instead as husband for Mary; Sir Francis Walsingham, to whose unscrupulous ingenuity Mary owed her present plight; Mr. Davison, Elizabeth's secretary, who was soon to taste a brew of her vacillating disfavour; and Mr. Beale, whom she had met often during the numerous redherring treaty negotiations at Sheffield and Chatsworth. These, and others like them, and some who would simply vote as they knew they must, for their own safety and the English Queen's favour, assembled for the impartial and unprejudiced examination of Queen Mary.

The first scene of the tragic farce opened on the day after their arrival, when Sir Walter Mildmay headed a small deputation to the prisoner, bearing a letter, laconically endorsed "The Scottish," in which Elizabeth went over the old ground of her surprise at Mary's refutation of the charge against her, and making the debatable statement that, as the Queen of Scotland was in England and under Elizabeth's protection, she was subject to the laws of England.

Mary instantly corrected these misapprehensions, declaring that she was a Queen, who had come to England

for promised succour, and not for protection ; and that since her arrival she had been a prisoner, and was, therefore, not subject to the laws of that country. She declined her judges as being Protestants, and called the attention of the deputation to the fact that she was ignorant of English laws, and that, being denied counsel and lacking all her papers and notes, she was helpless. She concluded by repudiating anew any cognisance of any attempt that might have been designed against Elizabeth.

The next day was largely occupied by the Commissioners in trying to argue Mary from her standpoint that they had no proper right to judge her, and that she was not subject to English law. Her contention was that she could only be tried by the canon and civil law, and that, as these laws were brought into being by Catholics, only Catholic judges, capable of properly interpreting and applying those laws, were competent to judge her. Her argument was unassailable, and could be met by nothing more convincing than Burghley's angry assertion that they were quite capable of judging her by those laws. On top of Burghley's assertion, it was explained to Mary that she was to have applied to her case two Acts of Parliament, passed within the previous two years, one of which declared it to be high treason for anyone to speak of Mary's succession to the Crown of England during Elizabeth's lifetime ; and the other was that which embodied the Bond of Association.

Burghley, as if he were already aware of the outcome, became bullyingly impatient with the obstinate prisoner, until he drove her to remark : " I see well that you have already condemned me—all you do now is merely for form's sake," a judgment which has been confirmed by the verdict of history. Burghley is described by Bourgoing as " the most vehement man," during these discussions, and his attitude was probably occasioned by his desire to remove from Elizabeth any dregs that might remain in her mind of her suspicion that he was a well-wisher of the Scottish Queen. In the end he let Mary know flatly that if she refused to appear before the Commission, they would proceed with the trial and sentence

in her absence. On that note this day's informal Conference ended.

A courier took the report of how events were shaping to Elizabeth, who, hearing of Burghley's determination, sent a messenger post-haste to warn the Commissioners that sentence was to be deferred until their return, and until after she had read the full report of the proceedings. That this message was not the result of any sudden commiseration for Mary is clear from a perusal of the letter which the same messenger brought for her.

" You have planned in divers ways and manners to take my lief and to ruin my kingdom by the shedding of blood. I never proceeded so harshly against you; on the contrary, I have maintained you and preserved your life with the same ease as I use for myself. Your treacherous doing will be proved to you, and made manifest in the very place where you are. And it is my pleasure that you shall reply to my Nobles and to the Peers of my kingdom as you would to myself were I there present. I have heard of your arrogance, and therefore I demand, charge and command you to reply to them. But answer fully, and you may receive greater favour from us.

" ELIZABETH."

Elizabeth evidently recalled her *bon mot* anent the hawk and the bird, but forgot entirely the purpose of Mr. Killigrew's visit to the Earl of Mar in Scotland, a few days after the Primate had begged for Mary's execution. It would, also, be difficult to quote a clearer instance of prejudgment than that with which the letter opens.

The Scottish Queen spent most of Monday night worrying over the problem that Sir Christopher Hatton had put before her at the conclusion of the day's discussions. He had pointed out that, if she refused to appear, people would take her to be guilty; whereas if she would consent to be interrogated she could prove her innocence, which would restore her honour and please his Queen. The truth of this troubled her; if she did not defend herself, she would undoubtedly be assumed guilty, not only by these judges, but by the whole world and posterity,

Early on the morning of Tuesday, October 14th, the Queen sent for the Commissioners, and a deputation immediately waited upon her. After some discussion, she said, under protest: "Now, as always heretofore, I will not spare my life in defence of my honour; and rather than do injury to other princes and my son, I am prepared to die, should the Queen, my good sister, have such an evil opinion of me as to believe that I have attempted aught against her person. In order to prove my goodwill towards her, and to show that I do not refuse to answer to the charges of which I am accused, I am prepared to answer to that accusation only, which touches on the life of Queen Elizabeth, of which I swear and protest that I am innocent."

When her full statement had been put into writing, and the Queen had taken a little wine, she agreed, feeling weak and ill, to appear in the hall of council.

It was not strange that Mary should have taken this really ill-advised step. For nineteen years she had lived with the stigma of murderer upon her, because she had declined to be judged by improper and inferior judges when the Earl of Moray and his associate rebels were defaming her unheard. The memory of this must have strongly influenced her to waive her dignity in order to save herself from the added charge of attempted murder. Theoretically Mary's consent to appear was a mistake, yet, by it, she did win the dignity of death by execution. Had she refused to be tried, Elizabeth would doubtless have found someone less squeamish about assassinating her than Sir Amyas Poulet proved to be. She gained, too, the sympathy of posterity by virtue of the manifest injustice of her pretended trial, and the dubious quality of the evidence on which she was condemned.

§4

Slowly, because of her chronic rheumatism, Mary Stewart, the train of her black velvet mantle borne by Renée Beauregard, and supported by Melville and Bourgoing, entered the judgment hall surrounded by a guard

of halberdiers, and followed by her surgeon, her apothecary, and three faithful waiting-women. The Commissioners rose and uncovered as she greeted them, and, after a spontaneous protest against her chair being set outside the dais, she sat down and faced her judges. To the side behind her was the dais, emblazoned with the arms of England, and upon it the throne which represented the last survivor of the relentless triumvirate of her lifelong enemies. Before her were those who represented the power and majesty of the law of England, and Elizabeth's leading ministers. The Lord Chancellor, the Lord Treasurer, the Attorney-General, the Solicitor-General, and two premier judges, four other judges, two doctors of civil law, a notary, and the members of the Privy Council.

"Alas!" she said to Melville, standing beside her chair, "here are many counsellors, but not one for me."

This remark stated less than the truth of her position. The reason that she was denied counsel to represent her was given by Walsingham as "Forasmuch as it was a matter *de facto* and not *de jure*, and altogether concerned a criminal cause, she neither needed nor ought to be allowed counsel in the answering thereof." Sir Francis was taking no chances of any obstacle being erected to stay the smooth course of his design. The disability that the Queen suffered through this lack of counsel was intensified by the fact that every scrap of writing that she had possessed pertaining to the accusation with which she was charged had been taken from her rooms at Chartley, while she had been at Tixall. She was so afflicted with rheumatism that she could write only slowly and with the greatest difficulty, yet the Commissioners refrained from the courtesy of offering her a clerk to make such notes as she might need during the proceedings.

The travesty of a trial opened with the Lord Chancellor's speech, in which he declared that the Queen of England had been surely informed that the Queen of Scots had planned the destruction of her person and the downfall of her kingdom; and invited Mary to listen to the reading of the Commission, promising her that she

should be allowed to say whatever she wished. Before the Commission was read Mary formally protested that she appeared as a Queen, and not as a subject of Elizabeth, but in order to show by her replies that she was innocent of the crime against the Queen's person with which she was charged. The Lord Chancellor agreed to record her protest, but without prejudice to the dignity and supreme power of Elizabeth, or to the prerogative or jurisdiction of the Crown ; and he denied vehemently that Mary had, as she had stated, come to England under promise of assistance from Elizabeth. The Commission being read in Latin, the prisoner again protested against it and the laws upon which it was based, again declaring roundly that they had been framed expressly to damage her claim to the English throne and to bring her to her death.

The Queen's Sergeant then made a speech, and cited specifically the Babington correspondence, whereupon the Scottish Queen intervened to deny that she had trafficked with Babington, and that she knew nothing of the six gentlemen to whom he had alluded. One of the lawyers then rose and read the depositions that Babington had made before execution, the copies of the correspondence that passed between him and Mary, and the confessions of Nau and Curle.

The Queen instantly demanded an open collation of the copies with the originals, as it was " quite possible that my ciphers had been tampered with by my enemies." She admitted to having done her utmost to procure her liberty, and had desired to deliver the Catholics from their oppression : " But I declare formally that I never wrote the letters that are produced against me. Can I be responsible for the criminal projects of a few desperate men, which they had planned without my knowledge or participation ? "

The demand for the originals to be produced was ignored, and the morning was spent in the reading of the rest of the documentary evidence. During the reading of Babington's confession, the Queen protested against certain manifestly absurd points in it, and asked why, if Babington had really confessed such things, he had been

put to death without her being given an opportunity to confront him. Obviously, she pointed out, he had been killed hastily so that this should not be possible.

Burghley, by the end of the morning session, was clearly dissatisfied with the way things were going, and determined upon a policy of confusing the issue by introducing all manner of old, irrelevant matters. According to Bourgoing's account of the way the trial was handled in the afternoon, the evidence was presented in a haphazard, piecemeal fashion, all couched in terms of direct accusation, so that the Queen was being forced to jump from one unrelated subject to another, and had the utmost difficulty in dragging her questioners back to the one point at issue—that of the charge of assassination. The old cause of dissension, the affected suzerainty of the English over Scottish sovereigns, was used as one red-herring, and when Mary denied it utterly, and said that she was ready to die for her rights in that quarrel, Burghley broke in roughly with a reminder that, when thirteen years old, she had assumed the arms of England. Mary answered him that he knew perfectly well that she did that in obedience to Henri II, her father-in-law. The Lord Treasurer then jumped to attack Mary on the ground of her claim to the throne of England, so bitterly dear to him because her stand on this had wrecked his pet Treaty.

Mary defended her right to refrain from renunciation in an impassioned speech, concluding: "I believed in the word of a Queen. . . . I came to England relying upon the friendship and promises of your Queen. Look here," she cried, slipping Elizabeth's token ring from her finger, "see this pledge of love and protection which I received from your mistress—regard it well. Trusting to this pledge, I came amongst you. You all know how it has been kept."

The interrogation was at last brought back to the point of trial, with the close questioning of Mary about the four horsemen, mentioned in the alleged true copy of her letter to Babington, who were to have brought the news of Elizabeth's assassination to her. Intuition came to the

Queen's aid. She denied that she knew what the words meant, and turned to Walsingham, remarking to him that it was easy to imitate ciphers and handwriting, and that she feared that this was all his work for her destruction; of him who, she was certain, had tried to deprive her, as well as her son, of life. She told the Commissioners also, that she had heard of the man Ballard as one who would serve her, but that she had heard that he had great intelligence of Monsieur Walsingham.

Walsingham, after Burghley had made another angry effort to sidetrack the discussion, rose and addressed the Queen, denying that he bore her any ill-will, or that he had attempted anyone's death; and as to Ballard having any secret dealings with him, he asked how it was that he had not so declared, and so saved his life.

Mary, so often a victim of ingenuousness, accepted Walsingham's statement, forgetting that the confession of a hanged man was as easy to doctor as were her own letters. In withdrawing her accusation, she mentioned Morgan's name, and at once Burghley was on his feet, reminding her that this servant of hers had plotted with Parry for Elizabeth's death. Mary vehemently denied any knowledge of this, and appealed to the Commissioners as persons who knew well that she spoke truly. According to Bourgoing, at this point a number of Commissioners declared loudly that she was innocent of this crime. Burghley, alarmed at this expression of sympathy, insisted that Morgan was her pensioner. She denied it, while admitting that she had given him money for his services from time to time; but she demanded whether it was not true that the Master of Gray, and others, including even her son, were not pensioners of his Queen. To which Burghley had to reply that Elizabeth had made some gifts to James, as being her kinsman!

The confessions of Nau and Curle were next introduced. The judges held that, because the secretaries had affirmed that they had never written anything without letting her see it, and that the Queen allowed nothing to be produced without her knowledge, therefore her responsibility for the direction of the Babington conspiracy was

established. It was thus the word of the Queen against that of her servants, extracted from them under the fear of torture and death. Mary very properly demanded to know why Nau and Curle—"they at least are alive"—were not produced in person and examined in her presence. She told the accusers that Nau had always declared himself a servant of the King of France, and that he did not depend upon her; and that in that capacity he might have done anything. For twelve months past he had always carried on his work shut away in his own private room. Burghley affirmed that Nau had not been in any way constrained to make his sworn deposition, a statement which Mary ventured politely to doubt. She protested against her reputation as a Queen being made to depend upon the writing and witnesses of her secretaries, and asked to be shown the minutes of her correspondence, which would bear out all that she had said.

This reasonable demand, according to Bourgoing, was not so much as considered, but caused all the attackers to bombard her with insults and isolated accusations. "Like madmen they attacked her," he writes, "sometimes one by one, sometimes all together, which gave her Majesty occasion to make a very noble speech next morning."

After this badgering, the first day's proceedings ended. When the Queen returned to her apartments, "the poor Princess told us that it reminded her of the Passion of Jesus Christ, and that it seemed to her that, without wishing to make a comparison, they treated her as the Jews treated Jesus Christ when they cried: '*Tolle, Tolle, Crucifige.*'"

§5

The Queen, pale from a sleepless night, but serene despite the treatment she had received at Burghley's hands, entered the judgment hall at the appointed hour next morning, and, immediately the proceedings opened, made the noble speech to which Bourgoing has referred.

"I beg permission, gentlemen," she began, "to speak freely and to say all that I think is necessary, and without being interrupted, according to the promise made to me

yesterday by the Chancellor in the name of all this assembly. The manner in which I am treated appears to me very strange; not only am I brought to this place to be tried, contrary to the rights of persons of my quality, but my case is discussed by those who are not usually employed in the affairs of kings and princes. I thought only of having to reply to gentlemen who have virtue for their guide, and who hold the reputation of princes in honour; to those who devote themselves to the protection of their princes, to the preservation of their rights, and to the defence of their country, of which they are the guardians and protectors. Instead of this, I find myself overwhelmed under the importunity of a crowd of advocates and lawyers, who appear to be more versed in the formalities of petty courts of justice, in little towns, than in the investigation of questions such as the present. And although I was promised that I should only be questioned and examined on the one point—that, namely, concerning the attempt on the person of the Queen—they have presumed to accuse me, each striving who should surpass the other in stating and exaggerating facts, and attempting to force me to reply to questions which I do not understand, and which have nothing to do with the Commission. Is it not an unworthy act to submit to such conduct of such people, the title of a princess, one little accustomed to such procedures and formalities? and is it not against all right, justice and reason to deliver her over to them, weak and ill as she is, and deprived of counsel, without papers, or notes, or secretary? It is very easy for many together, and, as it appears to me, conspiring for the same object, to vanquish by force of words a solitary and defenceless woman. There is not one, I think, among you, let him be the cleverest man you will, who would be capable of resisting and defending himself, were he in my place. I am alone, taken by surprise, and forced to reply to so many people who are unfriendly to me, and who have long been preparing for this occasion; and who appear to be more influenced by vehement prejudice and anger than by a desire of discovering the truth and fulfilling the duties laid down for them by the Commission.

If, however, I must submit to this treatment, I ask, at least, that I may be permitted to reply to each person and to each point of the accusation separately, and one after the other, without confusion ; as, on account of my sickness and weakness, it is impossible for me to refer back in detail, as I should wish, to such a mass of subjects all advanced confusedly together. In any case I demand that, as this assembly appears to have been convened for my accusation, another shall be summoned in which I may refer freely and frankly, defending my rights and my honour, to satisfy the desire I have of proving my innocence."

Burghley, who, determined to manage the examination in his own way, had taken upon himself the duties of the Attorney-General and the Queen's Sergeant for this second day's proceedings, assured the Queen that she might say all she would, and, while promising that her demand for a fresh assembly should be seen to, he explained that the Commissioners had not the power to grant it. He was stage-managing the session, and none of the assembly spoke without a nod of assent from him. The fact that many of the Commissioners had come to the hall booted and spurred, made it clear that the "trial" was to be finished that day.

Mary's demand for fair treatment and orderly procedure was ignored. The day was spent in Burghley's reiteration of the original accusations, and her masterly rebuttal of them. He told her, when she said that she would be in a better position to rebut the accusations if she could have her papers, that her papers would be of no use to her, as her secretaries and Babington ("who were never put to the torture") had affirmed that she had sent certain letters to Babington, and that it was for the Commissioners to judge whose word they should accept. He then resumed his practice of side-tracking the discussion, and introduced the matter of her negotiations with Spain for the transmitting of her rights to Philip, and the conveyance of James to Spain. Mary refused to discuss this, as being a matter for princes only. Burghley then made the point as to whether Mary could have answered

for Elizabeth's safety if a Spanish army had landed in England. To which she replied that she knew nothing of their intentions, and that all she desired was her deliverance from prison. She pointed out that the foreign princes and Catholics who may have designed anything on her behalf were acting in their own interests, to remove the oppression under which Catholics suffered. "No Catholic," answered Burghley, "had been punished for his religion!"

The examination ended with Mary's demand to be heard in full Parliament, and to confer personally with Queen Elizabeth. As she left the hall she spoke with a group of Commissioners as to the motives that could have caused Nau and Curle to make their depositions; and then turning to the lawyers, she said: "Gentlemen, you have shown little mercy in the exercise of your charge, and have treated me somewhat rudely, the more so as I am one who has little knowledge of the laws of quibbling; but may God pardon you for it, and keep me from having to do with you all again."

The Commissioners, at her withdrawal, were ready to pass the arranged sentence, but their haste was disappointed when Burghley acquainted them with Elizabeth's orders that, in the event of the prisoner being found guilty, the sentence should be suspended until she had considered the report. He announced the prorogation of the assembly for ten days, and that the next meeting would be in the Star Chamber at Westminster.

§6

The tragi-comedy was to all intents and purposes ended, the proceedings in the Star Chamber which followed being a mere epilogue, to which none need stay to listen. As an instance of English justice the trial remains for all time singular, unique. Reviewing the proceedings at Fotheringhay, we see a case under consideration in which only the prosecution is represented, in which no judge sits and no witnesses appear. We see a procedure degenerating into the babble of a rabble of ill-mannered nobles and officials, in which no witnesses are called to

be examined or cross-examined. We see a prisoner deprived of the only documents that would enable her to defend herself, and her request for their production refused without reason given. We see the leader for the prosecution stating that the only papers relevant to the case were those dated after June 1st of that year, and yet dragging in, as evidence, documents relating to events which had occurred thirty years earlier. There is neither speech for the prosecution nor for the defence; there is no summing-up, or balancing of evidence. Reduced to fundamentals, the so-called trial consisted of the reiterated affirmation of the Commissioners that the stacks of documents that were read contained irrefutable evidence of Mary's guilt, and her unshaken denial that she had written the crucial passages upon which she was condemned. The word of Phelippes, a professional forger and decipherer, was accepted as sufficient to satisfy a court of justice that the copies of the condemnatory letters were true; and he was not produced for examination. The depositions of her imprisoned secretaries were similarly honoured, as also were those of the conspirators who had been hurried to the gallows lest by any mischance they might be called as witnesses. Finally, not a single original letter or document was produced at the trial.

Burghley was complacently content with the outcome of his astute manœuvres. "The Queen of the castle,"—thus he playfully describes Mary in his letter to Davison, written that evening—"was pleased to appear before us in public. . . . Her intention was, by long and artificial speeches, to excite the pity of the judges, to throw all the blame upon the person of Her Majesty the Queen, or rather upon the Council, from whom she said all the past troubles emanated; maintaining that her offers were reasonable, and that the refusal came from our side. And on this point I fought, and refuted her arguments in such a manner, by my knowledge and experience, that she did not have the advantage she had promised herself. I am also certain that the audience did not think her position worthy of much pity, her allegations being proved to be untrue."

On October 25th the Commissioners met in the Star Chamber, and having produced Nau and Curle for the simple purpose of reaffirming their depositions and confessions, Mary was found guilty of having " compassed and imagined since the 1st of June aforesaid divers matters tending to the hurt, death, and destruction of the Queen of England." There was one dissentient, Lord Zouch, who expressed himself as unconvinced of her guilt.

§7

It was now Elizabeth's cue to begin to dress her window with reluctance and sympathy; and those who are able to accept her words as sincere can envision her as a pitying woman, very distressed at the insistence of Parliament that the sentence of death must be carried out. She cannot, she says, take a speedy decision, as it is her custom to deliberate long on matters of much less importance than this. She begs the Houses of Parliament to devise some means whereby the condemned Queen may be spared and her own security guaranteed. Her advisers were either unable or unwilling to discover such a means. Possibly she was once more a victim of her constitutional uncertainty in the face of clear decisions, and hesitated from a complexity of motives to conclude that which she had determined to do. It may also have been that she hoped that some unscrupulously loyal subject would of his own accord effect Mary's death by knife or poison, and so save the Protectrix of the Protestant world from the odium of cutting off her victim's head. One cannot be sure how soon this notion, which Walsingham later conveyed to Poulet, entered her wily head.

Although Mary was reported by Poulet, on October 30th, to have been sick in bed these five or six days, his general account of her mood and conduct proves that she showed no sign of dismay or fear after the departure of the Commissioners. He made a point of seeing her frequently, and even ameliorated her living conditions somewhat, in the hope of trapping her into indiscreet speech or, even, confession. He found her, however, "free from grief of mind in outward appearance," and

for his pains had to endure lengthy discourses upon English history from his charge, and to partake in debates with her upon the proposition that, fundamentally, it was her Catholicism that was at the root of the action that had been taken against her. Nothing in the way of confession falling from her lips, he began to find her conversation tedious, and asked plaintively of Burghley whether there was any need for him to inflict himself with her company. So far as one can judge, he found himself no match for the Queen in these talks on the religious aspect of her position; and it was evidently her unanswerable arguments that provoked his tedium. A term was soon put to his need to treat his prisoner with consideration.

Lord Buckhurst, accompanied by the ubiquitous Mr. Beale, arrived at Fotheringhay on November 19th, to announce to Mary that sentence of death had been passed upon her. They waited upon her next day, and having told Mary of the sentence, Lord Buckhurst explained that Elizabeth had not yet signed the sentence. He told that "the Queen, the State, and religion" were no longer safe, and that, as in the circumstances both Queens could not live, one of them must die. She was therefore warned to prepare herself for death, and that a bishop and a dean would be sent to her for consolation. Mary heard him calmly, answering that she had expected this sentence, "for I have long known that you would bring me to this end." In a letter to the Archbishop of Glasgow, Mary has left her own account of the occasion.

"She (Elizabeth) also says that the occasion of this my death is the instant request made to her by her people who, considering that I am still alive, and being her rival, as it appears by my having some time ago taken the name and arms belonging to this Crown (and being not prepared to renounce them, unless with the condition of being declared to be next in the succession to the throne), she cannot live in safety in her kingdom. Seeing even that all the Catholics call me their Sovereign, and that her life has been so often attempted to this end, and that, so long as I live, her religion cannot safely exist in this kingdom.

"I thanked God and them for the honour they did me in considering me to be such a necessary instrument for the re-establish-

ment of religion in this island, of which, although unworthy, I desired to take it upon myself to be a very pressing and zealous defender. In confirmation of all this, as I had before protested, I offered willingly to shed my blood in the quarrel of the Catholic Church; and moreover, even, if the people thought that my life could serve for the good and public peace of this island, I would not refuse to give it to them in reward for the twenty years they had detained me in prison. As to their bishops, I praise God that without their aid I know well enough my offences against God and His Church, and that I do not approve their errors, nor wish to communicate with them in any way. But if it pleased them to permit me to have a Catholic priest, I said I would accept that very willingly, and even demanded it in the name of Jesus Christ, in order to dispose my conscience, and to participate in the Holy Sacraments, on leaving this world. They answered me that, do what I would, I should not be either a saint or martyr, as I was to die for the murder of their Queen and for wishing to dispossess her. I replied that I was not so presumptuous as to aspire to these two honours; but that although they had power over my body by Divine permission, not by justice, as I am a Sovereign Queen, as I have always protested, still they had not power over my soul, nor could they prevent me from hoping that through the mercy of God, who died for me, He will accept from me my blood and my life, which I offer to Him for the maintenance of His Church, outside of which I should never desire to rule any worldly kingdom, thereby risking the eternal kingdom either here or elsewhere. . . . But to have contrived, counselled, or commanded Elizabeth's death, that I have never done, nor would I suffer, for my own account, that one single blow should be given to her. . . . In any case, I wished to die and to obey the Church, but not to murder anyone in order to possess his rights; but in all this I saw clearly portrayed Saul's persecutions of David, yet I cannot escape as he did, by the window, but it may be that from the shedding of my blood protectors may arise for the sufferers in this universal quarrel."

Mary, it will be noted, insisted in brushing aside all the superficialities relating to her position, and brought the matter of her condemnation back to the point of her religion, which had governed the actions and enmity of her enemies since, twenty-five years earlier, Elizabeth had given her cruiser commanders orders to waylay her on her voyage from France. All the plots, of which she

had been made the centre, were for politico-religious ends, the restoration of the old religion, and the recovery of the power and Church wealth which had been shared out among the supporters of Henry VIII and the Earl of Moray's party. Mary's claim to the throne which Elizabeth occupied would have been unquestionable if Henry had not made himself Defender of the Faith in order to satisfy his appetite for wives, and his greed as spoiler of the Church. Because Mary insisted on remaining a Catholic, and so jeopardised by her existence the security of Protestantism, she had to die. As Lord Buckhurst frankly admitted, it was a case of her or Elizabeth. The execution of Mary Queen of Scots was a master-stroke of Protestant policy, her contemptible son being the man he was.

Lord Buckhurst and Mr. Beale left Fotheringhay on the day following their interview with the Queen, and on their departure Poulet abandoned his recent clumsy artifice of pretended good feeling towards his captive, which he had practised since the trial in the hope of trapping her into a confession. Taking his assistant, Sir Drew Drury, with him, he went with his head covered into the Queen's apartment, and informed her that, as she had shown no signs of repentance, Elizabeth had commanded that her dais bearing her arms should be removed, "because you are now only a dead woman, without the dignity or honours of a queen." Mary's servants refusing his orders to take the dais down, he called in a number of his soldiers to dismantle the room; but next day he admitted to Mary that he had lied in saying that he had done this by Elizabeth's orders, that it was actually by those of some members of the Council. Mary's reply was to place a crucifix in the place where the dais had stood.

The days went by until weeks became months, and still the English Queen vacillated. The suspense of the prisoner can only be imagined. As early as November 23rd, two days after Buckhurst's departure, while she was writing her farewell letters to the Pope, the Archbishop of Glasgow, Mendoza, and the Duke of Guise, she remarked to Mendoza that she heard noises which

she believed to be those of workmen erecting her scaffold.

The letters of Sir Amyas Poulet during the weeks that followed the visit of Lord Buckhurst are chiefly remarkable for his anxious concern for the delay in carrying out the sentence. Early in December he writes to Walsingham that his Queen's faithful subjects shall not sleep soundly until "the head and seed plat of all practices and conspiracies, tending to the imminent subversion of Prince, realm, and people, be utterly extirped. . . . There is no other remedy than by a gaol delivery, which God will send in due time." His Puritan tendencies betray themselves, when he writes, having heard that de Préau is to be permitted to go to his prisoner: "This lady continueth in her former wilful and wicked disposition. No outward sign of repentance; no submission, no acknowledging of her fault, no craving of pardon, no mention of desire of life; so it may be feared lest as she hath lived so she will die, and I pray God that this Popish ignorant priest be not admitted unto her by His just judgment to increase her punishment." He seems to have been frankly puzzled as to the reason for the delay, and, on December 19th, he writes to Burghley pleading economy as a good cause for the speedy carrying out of the sentence, there being not only the expenses of Fotheringhay to be considered, but also those entailed by the Queen's servants who had been left at Chartley. He appears to have continued his old practice of seeking to anger Mary into indiscreet speech: "Thus you see what passed between this Queen and us, wherein to obey your direction I have not failed to do all that I might, to provoke her to utter her stomach. . . . You may believe that she hath been urged to all that she hath said, as otherways she would have used her late accustomed silence."

A few days before Christmas, Mary had permission to write to Elizabeth, and the expectation of the ministers was that Elizabeth would sign the death-warrant before leaving London for Greenwich, where she was going for the season's festivities. Poulet feared that the letter

which Mary gave him to despatch might have the effect of softening Elizabeth's heart towards his prisoner, so he deliberately held up the letter so that it should not reach her until she had left London. He admitted this candidly in a letter to Secretary Davison. "To be plain with you," he wrote, "as with our very friend, we have used all convenient means to delay the receiving of this (Mary's letter) to the end that it might arrive at the Court too late to touch any action touching this lady that might be intended before Christmas. . . . I would have been glad, for some Christian respects that he (the priest) should have had no access to this Queen until the night before her execution, and indeed having received direction to send for him, I took it for a strong argument that the time of her execution was near at hand." "The delay is fearful," he writes on January 2nd. "God send it a good and happy issue."

Mary's letter moved Elizabeth to tears, but still she made no decision. The uncertainty that had characterised all her dealings with the Scottish Queen was still functioning strongly, and she seems always to have hoped that the continuing suspense would so ravel her prisoner's nerves, that she would be baited into making some kind of confession that would enable the execution to be carried out with a better show of justice than was possible as a result of the trial. As late as January 21st—on which date Melville and the priest were again removed from access to Mary—Poulet writes to Davison: "You write that her Majesty wisheth I should resort often to this lady and give her cause to discover herself and her affections as much as I can, because in her heat she is wont to speak *ex abundantia cordis*." It is significant that when Poulet was down with gout, and unable to repair to the Queen for this purpose, Sir Drew Drury successfully excused himself from acting as his substitute in the contemptible device to goad the suffering Queen.

§8

The Scottish Queen, during all this time of intolerable suspense, made no plea for her life or for mercy. She,



QUEEN ELIZABETH
From a painting by M. Gerrard

at least, was no longer capable of being misled regarding Elizabeth's intentions. She had given up all hope from the moment Lord Buckhurst had told her that either she or Elizabeth must die. The prospect did not appal her, and her courage remained serene, while she prepared herself for death. The fact that she was to die for her religion dispelled any natural terror, and her one fear was that she might be assassinated, or executed without witnesses to prove that she had died in the faith for which she had lived. The one favour that she asked of the English Queen was that she might be buried in France, near her mother's grave, and that, from among the papers that had been seized from her, she might be allowed to receive those which she needed for the purpose of making her will and settling her mundane affairs. It need hardly be added that neither request was granted.

Bourgoing let Poulet know that Mary was perturbed by the fear of being murdered, and, to the keeper's credit, it must be admitted that his violent anger at the suggestion was honest. Blunt, insensitive, and bigoted as he was, he had no suspicion that there would be any ground for his prisoner's dread. He did not guess, as she did, that there might be some sinister purpose behind the long delay in execution, which was exercising his anxiety for the sound sleep of loyal subjects. His only fear seems to have been that Elizabeth might be moved with pity for her victim; he did not dream that Elizabeth was prepared to interpret the famous Bond of Association as an undertaking by the signatories to commit murder on her behalf. He went on with his pettifogging habit of irritating Mary, taking away her priest and steward, and forbidding the carrying of a ceremonial rod in front of the dishes served for the Queen's dinner, as being an unendurable evidence of royal dignity in one who was no more than a dead woman. He refused to forward her second letter to the English Queen, and carried on his practice of trying to move her to angry speech.

Meanwhile Burghley and Walsingham were doing all that they could to persuade or terrify Elizabeth to sign the death-sentence without further delay. They and other

ministers seem to have entered into a vague conspiracy to force her hand by exaggerating to her every rumour and report that they could come by. Spain was equipping an armada ; the Duke of Guise had landed, or was on the point of landing, in Sussex ; the Duke of Parma was threatening this and that ; the Queen of Scots was reported to have escaped, and excitable justices of the peace were publishing hues and cries ; it was even reported that Poulet had murdered his charge.

A general breeze of terrorification was directed upon Elizabeth, and at last Secretary Davison placed the death-warrant among other papers before her for signature. When she had signed it, she complained to Davison of the want of zeal in Poulet and others, contending that they did not understand the spirit of the Bond of Association and so relieve her of this enormous responsibility. She suggested to him that if a loyal subject would save her from the embarrassment of taking the life of a relation, the resentment of France and Scotland might be evaded. Davison was disturbed by this trend of the Queen's thoughts, and consulted Burghley and Walsingham.

The result of the meeting of the ministers was that the following letter, signed by Walsingham and Davison, was sent express to Poulet and Drury :

" After our hearty commendations, we find by speech lately uttered by Her Majesty that she doth note in you both a lack of that care and zeal of her service that she looketh for at your hands, in that you have not in all this time of yourselves (without other provocation) found out some way to shorten the life of that Queen, considering the great peril she (Elizabeth) is subject unto hourly, so long as the said Queen shall live. Wherein, besides a kind of lack of love towards her, she noteth greatly that you have not that care for your own particular safeties, or rather of the preservation of religion and the public good and prosperity of your country, that reason and policy commandeth, especially having so good a warrant and ground for the satisfaction of your consciences towards God and the discharge of your credit and reputation towards the world, as the oath of association which you have both so solemnly taken and vowed, and especially the matter wherewith she (Mary) standeth charged being so clearly and manifestly proved against

her. And therefore she taketh it most unkindly towards her, that men professing that love towards her that you do, should in any kind of sort, for the lack of the discharge of your duties, cast the burthen upon her, knowing as you do her indisposition to shed blood, especially of that sex and quality, and so near to her in blood as the said Queen is. These respects we do find do greatly trouble Her Majcsty, who, we assure you, has sundry times protested that if the regard of the danger of her good subjects and faithful servants did not more move her than her own peril, she would never be drawn to assent to the shedding of her blood. We thought it very meet to acquaint you with these speeches lately passed from her Majesty, referring the same to your good judgments. And so we commit you to the protection of the Almighty.

“ Your most assured friends.”

Poulet and Drury jointly signed an answer in which they refused the assassin’s office “ to shed blood without law or warrant.” If Poulet had done as he was told to do by Davison, in a hurried note which he sent after the above letter, posterity would probably have been deceived by Elizabeth’s words and conduct subsequent to the execution, and would have believed that she really intended to deal mercifully with Mary. Davison told Poulet to put the letter in the fire, and promised to do the same by Poulet’s answer. The keeper, however, carefully kept copies of both, and so allowed the light of truth to play upon Elizabeth’s angry histrionics.

The warrant was signed and sealed on February 1st, and on the 3rd Elizabeth again saw Davison, and again expressed the opinion that there was another way than execution of ending the matter. He went at once to Burghley, who called the Council together, obtaining their unanimous assent to carrying out the warrant, and it was decided to give it to Mr. Beale, who, with great speed and secrecy, was to convey it to the Earls of Kent and Shrewsbury, who were charged with its execution.

Two days later the unfortunate Davison was again called before the Queen, who admitted that she had decided upon the execution of the Scottish Queen, but that she did not like the legal method, which would throw the whole responsibility upon her. Davison then handed

her Poulet's response to the assassination letter, which sent her into one of her famous swearing rages. Their next interview was on the morning of the execution, when the Queen told him in effect that it was a shame for her ministers that Mary was not already dead.

The shuffling and the hesitation had ended. Elizabeth appears to have had it in mind to send one Wingfield, as though acting for the blackguardly Archibald Douglas, to murder Mary. Davison knew that Mr. Beale had been at Fotheringhay for three days, and that the probability was that, while he was conversing with his raging Queen, the headsman's axe had fallen on the neck of her cousin.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

ELIZABETH ENDS THE WORK

§I

TO measure the magnitude of Mary Stewart's spirit, as displayed by her conduct during the last night and morning of her life, it is necessary to lift again for a moment the curtain of her past in order to understand how pitilessly life had dealt with her.

Tragedy had been her only faithful companion, from the day that she lost her father when she was one week old. As a State chattel, she had been exiled from her mother at five years; and, when she was only seventeen, her mother and her first husband had died within six months of one another. With this double grief still raw in her heart she came to Scotland to grapple with the bandit Protestant nobility which had driven her mother to her death, and many of whom had conspired with Elizabeth to dispossess her of her royal rights. Victim of her fidelity to her religion and of the political enmity of the Protestant Elizabeth and her Protestant nobility, she was driven into wedlock with the insufferable Darnley, whose jealousy made possible the murder of the faithful Riccio. Less than a year after that event, a band of her leading nobles had her second husband murdered, and spread rumours implicating her in the crime. Three months later she was abducted and shamefully ravished by Bothwell, and in another seven weeks was a prisoner in her cunning rebels' hands and separated permanently from her third husband. She had been parted from the son she loved since he was a year old, and for the nineteen years that had passed since, had had to languish in prison,

watching his affections being turned from her. For the same period she had had to bear, without an opportunity of rebutting them, accusations of murder and adultery; and also to suffer the ignominy that Elizabeth delighted to heap upon her. Finally her health was utterly broken by the rigours of her imprisonment.

These were the major experiences that life had given to prepare this woman to rise from her sick-bed to hear read her sentence of death on February 7th, 1587, and to walk, crippled with rheumatism, to the scaffold fifteen hours later.

If, in Mary Stewart, a murdereress and an adulteress died, it must for ever be possible to gather grapes of thorns and figs of thistles. A criminal has often gone to his death with a defiant, smiling gallantry; but surely the criminal has yet to die with love to his enemies in his heart and on his lips, and, a Catholic, to die in splendour with his crimes unconfessed and denied a priest to shrive his soul. "My end is in my beginning," was her motto; and it might be said that in her death was her life.

§2

They came to her, in the end, unexpectedly, Shrewsbury, Kent, and Beale, so that she had to ask for a little time to rise from bed and prepare herself to receive them as a Queen should; and when they came their mission was what she had guessed. She acknowledged with a smile Shrewsbury's expressed reluctance for the office that was his, the duty of announcing that the warrant for her execution was to be read to her; he had, after all, as her keeper for fifteen years, shown her more humanity than Puritan Poulet. When Beale had read the warrant, an impressive parchment with its Great Seal in yellow wax, she thanked him for such welcome news, being very glad to go from this world in which she had been in continual affliction.

It was, she told him without resentment, what she had been expecting day by day for eighteen years; anyhow, she was no good and of no use to anyone. Certainly she was a Queen born, and anointed, granddaughter of

Henry VII, and once Queen of France, but all her life she had known only sorrow. She admitted being quite ready and happy to die, and to shed her blood for Almighty God, her Saviour and her Creator, and for the Catholic Church. She had loved the Queen, her good sister, to whom she had come for promised succour only to be imprisoned for eighteen years in violation of all laws human and divine. Having said this, she remembered the technical charge on which she had been condemned, and placing her hand on a Catholic New Testament, swore her innocence: "I have never either desired the death of the Queen, or endeavoured to bring it about, or that of any other person." A solemn declaration, not to be made lightly by one whom the headsman's axe was to send to her last account next morning at eight o'clock!

The Earl of Kent broke in to question the validity of an oath made on a Catholic Bible, and advised Mary to confess her faults and embrace the true religion, offering her the Dean of Peterborough to guide her to conversion. Mary patiently explained to him that she knew well what she ought to know for her salvation and the good of her soul, and asked if she might see her own priest—who was in the castle—to help her to prepare for death. This was denied, on the ground that it was part of the Commissioners' duty to prevent such abominations which offend God. There followed some further discussion as to whether she would see the Dean, after which Kent's Puritan zeal got the better of him, and he told her flatly that she "could not live without endangering the State, the life of the Queen, and the religion. *Your life would be the death of our religion, your death will be its life.*" While thinking herself unworthy of such a death, Mary said she humbly received it "as a token of her admission among the elect servants of God."

The Commissioners then told the Queen that the hour of her execution had been fixed for eight o'clock on the next morning, whereupon, remarking that the time was very short, she asked again whether she might see her chaplain, and have restored to her the papers and accounts

which she would need for the making of her will. Both requests were refused ; and she learnt also that her desire to be buried in France had also been refused by Elizabeth. Bourgoing and others of her company pleaded with Shrewsbury to postpone the time of execution, if only for a few hours, but, although the Commission gave him latitude in this respect, he refused to do so. Doubtless Mr. Beale had faithfully conveyed to him Burghley's instructions to be swift and secret in executing the warrant.

On the withdrawal of the Commissioners, Mary turned at once to the task of comforting her distressed and weeping people, telling them that they should rejoice and not weep. She pointed out to them how the Earl of Kent had made it very clear that it was because of her religion that she was to be killed, and thanked God that He had given her such good occasion to suffer death for His holy name, His true religion, and His Church. She ordered supper to be hurried forward, and, while the meal was being got ready, she parcelled out the money she had, so much for each.

The Queen, during supper, was unaffected by the contagion of her devoted servants' grief, but seemed rather to act as one who has discovered some secret cause for happiness, breaking through the reverie in which she was like one enchanted, to speak with Bourgoing of her joy at discovering that her religion was admittedly the real cause of her doom. When the meal was done and they gathered round her, the Queen took wine and drank to them all, asking them also to drink to her welfare. She then distributed her clothing and other possessions, selecting tokens to be sent to all her relatives and friends, and, after sending a note to de Préau, asking him to let her know the most appropriate prayers for her remaining hours of life, and expressing the hope that she might yet be allowed to have his ministrations, she settled down to write out her will, and a letter to Henri III of France, the main purport of which is to ask him to reward her "desolate attendants," and to commend James to him "inasmuch as he shall merit it."

These occupations ended at two o'clock in the morning, when she had her feet washed, as a symbolical ceremony for her last journey ; and then lay down, fully dressed, to rest, surrounded by her praying women, while Jane Kennedy read to her from the Lives of the Saints. Suddenly she bethought herself of the bandage she would require for her eyes for her execution, and selected a fine, gold-embroidered kerchief. Then she lay back on her pillow, and though the hammering of the workmen in the execution hall could be heard, her countenance was so serenely happy that she seemed to the faithful Kennedy —to borrow her own exquisite phrase—to be laughing with the angels.

The Queen left her bed at six o'clock, and dressed with care in the robes of a Queen-dowager, and, having assembled her entire household, disbursed her money, and gave Bourgoing her gifts to deliver to the Duke of Guise and the King and Queen of France. Embracing her women, and giving her hands to the lips of her gentlemen, she said : “ My dear friends, I regret infinitely that I have not been able to show my gratitude to you in deed, as I should have wished, for the good and faithful services you have rendered me in my need. . . . I beg you all to assist at my death, and testify to my unalterable devotion to my religion. Be the witnesses of my last acts and my last words. I could not find any more faithful.”

She then retired to her oratory to pray.

§3

Queen Elizabeth and her chief ministers had never strained the quality of mercy in their treatment of Mary Queen of Scots ; and her last hour in their charge was unsweetened by that sovereign virtue. The knocking on the door which summoned her to the scaffold was heard while she was still at prayer. One of her servants asked that a few minutes' grace might be given, in order that the Queen might finish her devotions. Sir Amyas answered with a threat that the door would be battered down unless it was opened instantly. The Queen, unable to rise from her knees without assistance,

turned with a smile and ordered the door to be opened.

The Sheriff, bearing his white wand, entered, to stand confused and intrusive at the spectacle of the prisoner and her servants still upon their knees. He was a kindly man, and his voice is reported to have been uncertain with emotion, as he spoke his line: "Madame, the Lords have sent me to you."

She made no resistance, but answered him as simply: "Yes, let us go."

Bourgoing, her physician, with a hand under each arm-pit, helped her to her feet, and, when she had straightened her rheumatic limbs, gave her his arm as far as the threshold of the apartments. There he paused to tell her that neither he, nor any of her servants, wished to lead her to the executioner. Happy at his delicacy, she repeated what he had said to the Sheriff, who ordered two of Sir Amyas's guards to support her.

A commotion, as she went towards the stairs, made her turn, and she saw her servants being forcibly driven back into the apartments, despite their anxious pleas to be allowed to attend her. The Queen remonstrated gently at being deprived of their company, bade them farewell as the door closed upon them, and went on down the staircase.

The Earls of Kent and Shrewsbury, awaiting her coming on the lower landing, were astonished at the serene dignity of her bearing and the composure of her features. A man broke from the little crowd that was assembled, and as he came and knelt at her feet, her calm was dispersed by a smile of gladness. He was Melville, her faithful steward, who, like her chaplain, de Préau, had been cruelly separated from her during the past three weeks. She soothed his evident grief with gentle words, and bade him transfer to her son the service and affection that he had always shown to her.

"Tell him to keep me in memory," she added, "and report to him faithfully what thou shalt have seen of his mother's last moments. I have not attacked his religion more than that of others, and I wish him all prosperity."

As I pardon all in Scotland who have offended me, so would I wish that they would pardon me. May God enlighten my son, and send him His Holy Spirit."

Melville answered that it would be the sorrowfullest message that he had ever carried, that his Queen and mistress was dead ; but she assured him that it was not so, since "to-day, good Melville, thou seest the end of Mary Stewart's miseries. That should rejoice thee." Then she told him to be the bearer of the news that she had died a Catholic, firm in her religion, a faithful Scotswoman and a true Frenchwoman ; and asked him again to take her blessing to her son.

"The hour has struck," broke in one of the Commissioners.

When she had embraced Melville, William Fitzwilliam, the castellan of Fotheringhay, approached, and, dropping to his knee, kissed the Queen's hand. This was the one gesture of chivalrous sympathy that was made by the English on that day.

The Queen then made her last effort on behalf of her servants. She turned to Kent and Shrewsbury and begged them to intercede with Elizabeth for Curle, and that her servants who were in the castle might be allowed to witness her end. Their Commission did not prohibit the granting of this request, and, after consulting together, they agreed that she might choose six of her people to attend her. The Queen named Bourgoing, and three other gentlemen, and Elizabeth Curle and Jane Kennedy. The earls demurred at allowing any women, alleging that they would distract the ceremony with noisy lamentations, and would want to dip their kerchiefs in her blood. The Queen answered their remonstrance by giving her word as a Queen for the good behaviour of the women ; but still her appeal was resisted. The Queen then used the weapon she had used sparingly of late, one that had never failed her.

"Do you then forget," she demanded with dignity, "that I am cousin of your Queen, that I am of the blood-royal of Henry VII, that I am Queen-Dowager of France, and anointed Queen of Scotland ?"

The assertion of her sovereign rank defeated their opposition, and her four gentlemen and two gentlewomen were sent for.

The tragic procession then formed to proceed to the hall of execution. The Sheriff and his escort led the way, followed by Poulet, Drury, Beale, Kent, and Shrewsbury; then came the Queen of Scots, with her servants, Melville being permitted to bear her train.

The entire hall was draped in the colour of death, the only spot of brightness being the fire which blazed at the upper end, near the black-covered scaffold. The cloaks of the executioner and his assistant were the same grim colour, and their faces were hidden by black masks. The black block was placed near the fireplace, and before it were two chairs for the two Commissioners. Two other chairs were placed outside a low balustrade for the Queen's keepers, Poulet and Drury; and there was a stool on the scaffold for the victim. A guard of halberdiers stood at attention around it. Three hundred spectators stood in the remoter parts of the hall, and the murmur of the large crowd outside the castle could be heard.

The Queen, raising her crucifix before her, walked tremorless towards the scaffold, while outside the windows a band began to play a dirge, a dirge which usually accompanied witches to their death. Her features composed in radiant serenity, she reached the scaffold, and paused there, unable because of her rheumatic joints to ascend the steps unaided. Sir Amyas, who as a victim of gout sympathised with her infirmity, offered his arm, and conducted her to the stool.

"Thanks for your courtesy, Sir Amyas," she said, pleasantly. "This will be the last trouble I shall give you, and the most agreeable service you have ever rendered me."

She seated herself, with an earl on either side and the Sheriff in front of her, and made her last appeal that her chaplain might be allowed to attend her during her last moments, in order that she might console herself in God. This request was roughly refused.

The Queen appeared not to be listening while Robert Beale stood to read the Commission of execution ; but when the assembly greeted its ending with a loud cry of "God Save the Queen," she made the sign of the Cross.

Shrewsbury now stood before her, saying : " Madame, you hear what we are commanded to do."

" Do your duty," she answered, the colour coming to her cheeks, and her face seeming to recapture the peerless beauty that had been hers before nearly two decades of imprisonment had saddened it.

The Queen then made a short speech in which she referred to her rank, her long and unjust imprisonment, and her willingness to die for her religion. She denied that she had ever suggested, or consented to, the design to assassinate Elizabeth ; alluded to those who had fixed this crime upon her, and forgave them all with a good heart, and begged that all whom she might have offended would forgive her. " After my death," she concluded, " it will be known and seen to what end those who are the authors of my being sent from this world have desired and procured my death. I accuse no one any more than I have done previously ; my tongue shall do harm to no one."

The Dean of Peterborough then advanced to her and said that he had come at Elizabeth's command to prepare her for death. The Queen gently begged him to hold his peace, as she did not wish to hear him ; but, when he persisted in exhorting her to repent of her crimes, she commanded him to be silent. The Dean was not to be silenced, however, until Shrewsbury, repelled by the unseemliness of his behaviour, ordered him to cease his exhortations and begin to pray ; suggesting to the Queen that, as she would not listen to the Dean's exhortations, they should all pray for her in common.

She thanked him, but pointed out that she could not pray with them, because of the difference of religion.

So, while Mary prepared her soul for imminent death by repeating Catholic prayers and the penitential psalms,

the Dean prayed aloud that God would grant her repentance, that He would bless Elizabeth with long life, victory over her enemies, and the triumph of the Protestant religion, his prayer being repeated in chorus by the assembled people. When the Dean had done, Mary continued to pray in English, for pardon for herself and forgiveness for her enemies; for the Catholic Church; for England and Scotland; and for James and Elizabeth. As she ended she rose from her stool, and, raising the crucifix, said: "As Thy arms, O Christ! were extended on the Cross, even so receive me into the arms of Thy mercy, and blot out all my sins with Thy most precious blood."

The Earl of Kent roughly told her that it were better for her to eschew such Popish trumpery, and bear Christ in her heart.

"Can I," she answered him, unruffled, "hold the representation of the sufferings of my crucified Redeemer in my hand, without bearing Him, at the same time, in my heart?"

The two Commissioners then asked her if she had any private matter to confess, to which she answered in the negative. The time had at last come to prepare herself for execution.

§4

The Queen began at once to remove her outer clothing, and the executioner stepped forward offering to assist; but she drew back, and waved him aside with her hand.

"Let me do this," she begged him, smiling. "I understand this business better than you. I have not been accustomed to be served by such a groom of the chamber, nor to disrobe before so numerous a company."

But her stiffness prevented her from unfastening her robes unaided, and turning to where Elizabeth Curle and Jane Kennedy knelt beyond the balustrade, she beckoned them to her. They came to her, but the misery of this last office for their beloved mistress wrung from

them wailings and cries of anguish, so that the Queen had to remind them that she had promised for them, and that she would have to send them away if they did not desist. She tried to comfort them by saying that they should be glad to see her die in so good a cause.

They took off a chain, which she asked one of them to convey to the Countess of Arundel as a last token to her, but the executioner struggled with Jane Kennedy for its possession, thrusting it into his shoe. It was his legitimate perquisite. At last the Queen stood, stripped to bodice and crimson petticoat, her arms covered with velvet sleeves of the same colour. Jane Kennedy took the gold-broidered kerchief, and attempted to bind her eyes. The finality of the action overcame her, and she and her companion broke into hysterical weeping. The Queen embraced them, and warned them again that she would have to send them away if they did not control their grief; and took a smiling farewell of her gentlemen standing outside the balustrade. The faithful Jane bound her eyes.

The executioners came and knelt before her, begging her forgiveness. "I forgive you with all my heart," she said, "for in this hour I hope you will bring to an end all my troubles."

She then drew herself erect, and awaited the blow, which she expected would be struck with a sword, in accordance with the French custom for royal victims. Her misapprehension was explained to her, and she allowed herself to be led to the block. She lay down unhesitatingly and bowed her head upon the block, resting her chin upon her hands for ease of breathing. The assistant executioner took her hands away, holding them behind her back; while the Queen repeated *In manus tuas Domine commendabo*.

The Earl of Shrewsbury, as Earl-Marshal of England, raised the baton as the signal to the headman. He dropped his eyes, and covered his face to hide his tears, and so that he should not see the clumsy blow fall. It but wounded the Queen, and a second and third blow were needed, before the prematurely white-haired head was

free for the callous hand of the executioner to seize and raise, crying : " God save Queen Elizabeth ! "

" So perish all the Queen's enemies," cried the pious Dean.

" Amen," exclaimed the ruthless Puritan, Kent, his solitary loud voice sounding strangely in the hush of the respectful assembly.

The executioner, legitimately plundering the corpse of any articles of value, bethought him of the Queen's garters, and, while wrenching them from her still warm limbs, found a little Skye terrier which, unnoticed, had followed the Queen, and hidden under her clothes. The trusty animal was dragged forth, and being freed, went to the gap between the head and trunk, and remained there howling. The remains were removed—to the dismantled billiard table, so that the indignity that had been accorded her in life should not be denied to her in death. The terrier refused food, and died of grief.

§5

Queen Elizabeth, who had grumbled because those who had signed the Bond of Association declined to translate their oath into one for assassinating Mary ; who had signed the death-warrant ; who had informed the Master of Gray that she would not spare Mary's life, even if Scotland threatened war—she played her new rôle with consummate skill, as soon as the news that the execution had been carried out reached her. Davison, in whose presence she had signed the warrant, was made the scapegoat, and was put into the Tower, to await trial for misprision and treason ; he was fined £10,000.

Elizabeth wept and raged in her indignation against the Council who had forced her, after all, to bear the odium of the execution ; and the faithful Burghley and Walsingham were ostentatiously banished from her presence. To the fullest possible extent it was bruited abroad that the Council had acted against the Queen's wishes, and she asserted " that she was neither consenting to, nor cognisant of, the barbarous deed that had been perpetrated on her unfortunate kinswoman at Fotheringhay."

She sought by every means in her power to modify the stench of the odium, so that there should be mingled with it the pure smell of her personal innocence. She despatched Robert Cary to the Scottish King with the following letter :

" My dearest Brother: I would to God thou knewest (but not that thou feltest) the incomparable grief my mind is perplexed with, upon this lamentable accident, which is happened contrary to my meaning and intention, which, since my pen trembles to mention it, you shall fully understand by this my kinsman. I request you that as God and many others can witness my innocence in this matter, so you will also believe, that if I had commanded it, I would never deny it. I am not so faint-hearted, that for terror I should fear to do the thing that is just, or to own it when it is once done; no, I am not so base and ignobly minded. But as it is no princely part, with feigned words to conceal and disguise the real meaning of the heart; so will I never dissemble my actions, but make them appear in their true and proper colours. Persuade yourself this for truth, that as I know this has happened deservedly on her part, so if I had intended it, I would not have laid it upon others; but I will never charge myself with that which I had not so much as a thought of. Other matters you shall understand by the bearer of this letter. As for me, I would have you believe there is not any which loves you more dearly, or takes more care for the good of you and your affairs. If any man would persuade you to the contrary, you may conclude he favours others more than you. God preserve you long in health and safety."

It was clever political window-dressing, necessary, but distasteful to her proud temper. A knowledge of Elizabeth's character must convince anyone that she held her honour, in public, as worth more than the £10,000 of which she mulcted the innocent Davison, or that it could be restored by the temporary disgrace of her two principal ministers. Her code was a life for less than a life, where her personal integrity, in the eyes of the world, was endangered; and if the intolerable crime of Mary Stewart's execution had been committed against her honest desire, she would have had the head of the leading criminal. She has the credit of having been successful in so acting as to evade the consequences that the princes

free for the callous hand of the executioner to seize and raise, crying : " God save Queen Elizabeth ! "

" So perish all the Queen's enemies," cried the pious Dean.

" Amen," exclaimed the ruthless Puritan, Kent, his solitary loud voice sounding strangely in the hush of the respectful assembly.

The executioner, legitimately plundering the corpse of any articles of value, bethought him of the Queen's garters, and, while wrenching them from her still warm limbs, found a little Skye terrier which, unnoticed, had followed the Queen, and hidden under her clothes. The trusty animal was dragged forth, and being freed, went to the gap between the head and trunk, and remained there howling. The remains were removed—to the dismantled billiard table, so that the indignity that had been accorded her in life should not be denied to her in death. The terrier refused food, and died of grief.

§5

Queen Elizabeth, who had grumbled because those who had signed the Bond of Association declined to translate their oath into one for assassinating Mary ; who had signed the death-warrant ; who had informed the Master of Gray that she would not spare Mary's life, even if Scotland threatened war—she played her new rôle with consummate skill, as soon as the news that the execution had been carried out reached her. Davison, in whose presence she had signed the warrant, was made the scapegoat, and was put into the Tower, to await trial for misprision and treason ; he was fined £10,000.

Elizabeth wept and raged in her indignation against the Council who had forced her, after all, to bear the odium of the execution ; and the faithful Burghley and Walsingham were ostentatiously banished from her presence. To the fullest possible extent it was bruited abroad that the Council had acted against the Queen's wishes, and she asserted " that she was neither consenting to, nor cognisant of, the barbarous deed that had been perpetrated on her unfortunate kinswoman at Fotheringhay."

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of Europe might have visited upon a sovereign less astute and far-seeing than she. England and Scotland had, at last, been made safe for Protestantism; and Elizabeth's fear of deposition on the ground of illegitimacy was finally laid.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

THE author's personal aversion to footnotes and references in the body of a book is his only excuse and apology for having omitted them in the foregoing pages, his intention having been to write a simple study, and not a fully documented biography. Such quotations as appear in the text are mostly derived from contemporary documents and chronicles; where any debt to other writers is due, it is acknowledged in the narrative. Any further acknowledgment that may be due for anything in the book is given in the statement that the author owes a debt to the authors and editors of all the following works which, in addition to original documents, he has consulted: *History of Mary Stuart*, by Claude Nau, edited by the Rev. J. Stevenson; *History of the Reformation in Scotland*, by John Knox, edited by David Laing; *Mary Stuart*; *The First Eighteen Years of her Life*, by the Rev. J. Stevenson; *Mary Stuart, Maitland of Lethington*, *The Impeachment of Mary Stuart*, and *The Defence of Mary Stuart*, by Sir John Skelton; *Mary Queen of Scots in Captivity*, by J. D. Leader; *Queen Elizabeth and her Own Times*, by Thomas Wright; *Letters of Mary Queen of Scots and Documents connected with her Personal History*, by Agnes Strickland; *Mary Queen of Scots and her Marriage with Bothwell*, by Colin Lindsay; *Mary Stuart*, by D. Hay Fleming; *Inquiry into the Evidence against Mary Queen of Scots*, by William Tytler; *The History of Scotland*, *The Mystery of Mary Stuart*, and *John Knox and the Reformation*, by Andrew Lang; *Life of Mary Queen of Scots*, by T. F. Henderson; Schiern's *Life of Bothwell*; *Illustrations of British History*, by Edmund Lodge; *The Letter Books of Sir Amias Poulet*, edited by the Rev. John Morris; *The Tragedy of Fotheringay*, by Mrs. Maxwell Scott; Cobbett's *State Trials*; *Elizabeth and Mary Stuart*, and *The Fall of Mary Stuart*, by Frank Arthur Mumby.

APPENDIX A

CRAWFORD'S DEPOSITION

(The text of this document is taken from State Papers, Scotland, Elizabeth, Vol. xiii, No. 14, and Calendar of Foreign State Papers, Elizabeth, Vol. viii, No. 954, February 1566-7. For convenience in reading, words which are shown abbreviated in the text have been expanded, but otherwise the spelling of the original has been preserved.)

THE Wordes betwixt the Q(ueen) and me Thomas Crawforde bye the waye as she came to Glasco to fetche the kinge, when mye L(ord) my Master sent me to showe her the cause whye he came not to mete her him selfe.

Firste I made my L(ord) mye masters humble comendacons vnto her Majesty with th excuse that he came not to mete her praing her grace not to thinke it was eather for prudnesse or yet for not knowinge hys duetye towardes her highnesse, but onelye for want of healtc at the present, and allso that he woulde not presume to com in her presence vntille he knewe farder her minde bicause of the sharpe Wordes that she had spoken of him to Robert Cuningham hys servant in Sterling. Wherebye he thought he Was in her Majesty's displesvre Notwithstanding he hathe sent hys servant and frend to waite yppon her Majesty.

She aunswere that there was no recept against feare.

I aunswere that mye L(ord) had no feare for anie thinge he knewe in him self, but onelye of the colde and vnkinde Wordes she had spoken to hys servant.

She aunswere and said that he woulde not be a fraide in case he were not culpable.

I aunswere that I knewe so farr of hys Lordsh(ip) that he desired nothing more than that the secretts vf everye creatures harte were writte in theire face.

She asked me yf I had anie farder comission.

I aunswere no.

Then she comaunded me to holde mye peace.

The Wordes that I remember were betwixt the Kinge and the Queen in Glasco when she took him awaie to Edinbrowghe.

The Kinge for that mye L. hys father was then absent and sicke, byc reason wherof he could not speke with him him selfe, called me vnto him and thicse wordes that had then passed betwixt him and the Quene, he gaue me in remembraunce to reporte vnto the said myc Lord hys father.

After theirc metinge and short speking to gether she asked him of his letters, wherin he complained of the cruellyc of som.

He aunswerec that he complained not without cause and as he beleved, she woulde graunte her selfe when she was well advised.

She asked him of hys sicknessse, he answered that she was the cause therof, and moreover he saide, Ye asked me What I ment bye the crueltye specified in mye letters, that procedeth of yow onelye that wille not accepte myc offres and repentaunce, I confess that I haue failed in som things, and yet greater fautes haue bin made to yow sundrye tyme, which ye haue forgiue. I am but yonge, and ye will sayc ye haue forgiven me diverse tyme. Mayc not a man of mye age for lacke of Counselle, of which I am verye destitute falle twise or thrise, and yet repent and be chastised bye experiance? Yf I haue made anyc faile that ye but thinke a faile, howe so ever it be, I crave your pardone and protest that I shall never faile againe. I desire no other thinge but that we maye be to geather as husband and wife. And yf ye will not consent hereto, I desire never to rise forthe of thys bed. Therefore I pray yow give me an aunswere here vnto. God knowethe howe I am punished for makinge mye god of yow and for having no other thowght but on yow. And yf at anie tyme I offend yow, ye are the cause, for that when anie offendethe me, if for mye refuge I might open mye minde to yow, I woulde speak to no other, but when anie thinge ys spoken to me, and ye and I not beinge as husband and wife owght to be, necessite compelleth me to kepe it in my breste and bringethe me in suche melancholye as ye see me in.

She aunswerec that it seemed him slye was sorrye for hys sicknessse, and she woulde finde remedye therefore so sone as she might.

She asked him Whye he woulde haue passed awaye in Thenglishe shipp.

He aunswerec that he had spoken with thenglishe man but not of minde to goe awaie with him. And if he had, it had not bin without cause consideringe howe he was vsed. For he had neather to susteine him selfe nor hys servants, and nede not make farder rehersalle thereof, seinge she knew it as well as he.

Then she asked him of the purpose of Hegate, he aunswerec that it was tolde him

She required howe and bye whome it was told him.

He aunswere that the L. of Minto tolde him that a letter was presented to her in Cragmiller made bye her own devise and subscribed by certeine others who desired her to subscribe the same, which she refused to doe. And he said that he woulde never thinke that shc who was his owne propre fleshe, woulde do him anie hurte, and if anie other woulde do it, theye shuld bye it dere, vnlesse theye took him sleping, albeit he suspected none. So he desired her effectuously to beare him compayne. For she ever fownde som adoe to drawe her selfe from him to her owne lodginge and woulde never abyde with him past two howres at once.

She was verye pensiffe. Whereat he fownd faulfe he said to her that he was advertised she had browght a litter with her.

She aunswere that bicause she vnderstoode he was not hable to ryde on horseback, she brought a litter, that he might be caried more softlye.

He aunswere that yt was not mete for a sick man to travelle that could not sitt on horsebacke and especiallye in so colde weather.

She answered that she would take him to Cragmiller where she might be with him and not farre from her sonne.

He aunswere that vppon condicon he woulde goe with her which was that he and she might be to geather at bedde and borde as husband and wife, and that she would leaue him no more. And if she would promisc him that, vppon her worde he woulde goe with her, where she pleased without respecte of anye danger eather of sickness, wherein he was, or otherwise. But if she would not condescend thereto, he woulde not goc with her in anye wise.

She aunswere that her comminge was onlye to that effecte, and if she had not bin minded thereto, she had not com so farre to fetche him, and so she graunted hys desire and promised him that it should be as he had spoken, and therevppon gave him her hand and faithe of her bodye that she woulde love him and vse him as her husband. Notwithstanding before theye coulde com to geather he must be purged and cleansed of hys sicknesses, which she truisted woulde be shortlye for she minded to give him the bathe at Cragmiller. Than he said he woulde doe what soever she woulde have him doe, and woulde love all that she loved. She required of him in especialle, whome he loved of the nobilitie and Whom he hated.

He aunswere that he hated no man, and loved all alike well.

She asked him how he liked the Ladye Reresse and if he were angry with her.

He aunswere that he had litle minde of suche as she was, and wished to God she might serve her to her honour.

Then she desired him to kepe to him selfe the promise betwixt

him and her, and to open it no nobodye. For padventure the Lordes woulde not thinke welle of their sudine agrement, consideringe he and theyc were at some wordes before.

He aunswere that he knew no cause whye theyc shulde mislike of it, and desired her that she would not move anye of them against him even as he woulde stire none againte her, and that they woulde worke bothe in one mind, otherwise it might tourne to greater inconvenience to them bothe.

She aunswere that she never sowght anye waie bye him, but he was in fault him selfe.

He aunswere againe that hys faultcs were published and that there were that made greater faultes than ever he made that believed were unknowne, and yet theye woulde spcke of greate and smale.

Farder the Kinge asked me at that present time what I thowght of hys voyage. I aunswere that I liked it not, because she took him to Cragmiller. For if she had desired him with her self or to have had hys compayne, she would haue taken him to hys owne howse in Edinburgh Where she might more easely visit him, than to travelle two myles owt of the towne to a gentlemans house. Therefore mye opinion was that she tooke him awaye more like a prisoner than her husbande.

He aunswere that he thowght litle lesse him self and feared him selfe indeid save the confidence he had in her, and put him selfe in her handes, thowghe she showlde cutte hys throate and besowghte God to be iudge vnto them bothe.

The reader is invited to compare the foregoing with the italicised passages in the following copy of the Casket Letter, alleged to have been written by Mary to Bothwell from Glasgow. It should be kept in mind that this letter is an English translation of a French original, of which no copy survives; a fact which makes more remarkable the verbal similarities in the two documents. It may also be pointed out that the eighth paragraph of the letter reads: "I did still answer him but that shall be too long"; and that Crawford's report of what was obviously a long speech, is laconic: "She answered that it seemed him she was sorry for hys sickness, and she woulde finde remedye therefore as sone as she might."

APPENDIX B

LETTER II OF THE CASKET SERIES FROM GLASGOW

English Translation
(State Papers, Mary Queen of Scots, Vol. ii, No. 65)

BEING gon from the place where I had left my harte, it may be easily iudged what my Countenance was consydering what the body may without harte, which was cause that till dynner I had used lyttle talk, neyther wold any body advance him selfe therunto, thinking that it was not good so to doo.

Fowir myles from thence a gentleman of the Erle of Lennox cam and made his commendations and excuses unto me, that he cam not to meeete me, because he durst not enterprise so to doo, consydering the sharp wordes that I had spoken to Conyngham, and that he desyred that I wold com to the inquisition of the facte which I did suspecte him of. This last was of his own head, without commission, and I told him that he had no receipte against feare, and that he had no feare, if he did not feele him self faulty, and that I had also sharply answereed to the doubtes that he made in his letters as though ther had bene a meaning to poursue him. To be short I have made him hold his peace; for the reste it were long to tell you. Sir James Hamilton came to meeete me, who told me that at another tyme he went his waye when he heard of my comming, and that he sent unto him Houstoun, to tell him that he wold not have thought, that he wold have followed and accompany him selfe with the Hamiltons. He answeread that he was not com but to see me; and that he would not follow Stuard nor Hamilton, but by my commandment. He prayed him to go speake to him; he refused it.

The Lard Luce, Houstoun, and the sonne of Caldwell, and about XLty horse cam to meeete me and he told that he was sent to one day a law from the father, which shuld be this daye against the signing of his own hand, which he hathe, and that, knowing of my comming, he hath delayed it, and hath prayed him to go see him, which he hath refused and swearith that he will suffer nothing at his handes. Not one of the towne is come to speake with me,

which makith me to think that they be his, and then he speakith well of them at leaste his sonne.

The King sent for Joachim and asked him, why I did not lodge nigh to him, and that he wold ryse sooner and why I cam, whither it wear for any good appointment, that he cam, and whithit I had not taken Paris and Guilbert to write and that I sent Joseph. I wonder who hath told him so muche evin of the mariage of Bastian. This bearer shall tell you more vpon that *I asked him of his letters and where he did complayne of the crueltye of some of them. He said that he did dreme, and that he was so glad to see me that he thought he shuld dye. Indeede that he had found faulfe with me [that I was pensive].*

I went my waye to supper. This bearer shall tell you of my arryving. He praid me to com agayn, which I did: and he told me his grefe, and that he wold make no testament, but leave all unto me and *that I was cause of his sicknes for the sorrow he had, that I was so strange unto him.* ‘And (said he) you asked what I ment in my letter to speak of cruelty. It was of your cruelty who will not accepte my offres and repentance I avowee that I have done amisse, but not that I have always disauowd; and so have many other of your subjects don and you have well pardoned them.

I am young.

You will saye that you have also pardoned me many tymes and that I returne to my fault. May not a man of my age for want of counsell, fayle twise or thrise and mysse of promes and at the last repent and rebuke him selfe by his experiance? Yf I may obtayn this pardon I protest I will never make faulfe agayne. And I ask nothing but that we may be at bed and table togiether as husband and wife; and if you will not I will never rise from this bed. I pray you tell me your resolution heerof. God knoweth that I am punished to have made my God of you and had no other mynd but of you. And when I offend you somtyme, you are cause thereof: for if I thought, whan anybody doth any wrong to me, that I might for my refuge make my mone thereof unto you, I wold open it to no other, but when I heare anything being not familiar with you, I must keep it in my mynd and that troublith my wittes for anger.”

I did still answair him but that shall be too long. In the end I asked him why he wold go in the English shipp. He doth disavow it and swearith so, but confessith to have spoken to the men. Afterwards I asked him of the inquisition of Hiegate. He denyed it till I told him the very wordes, and then he said that Minto sent him word that it was said, that som of the counsayle had brought me a letter to signe to putt him in prison, and to kill him if he did resiste and that he asked this of Minto himself, who said unto him that he thought it

was true. I will talke with him to morrowe vpon that poynte. The rest as Wille Hiegate hath confesscd; but it was the next daye that he cam hither.

In the end he desyred much that I shuld lodge in his lodging. I have refused it. I have told him that he must be pourged and that could not be don heere. He said unto me "I have hard saye that you have brought the lytter, but I wold rather have gon with yourselfe." I told him that so I wolde myself bring him to Cragmillar, that the phisicians and I also might cure him without being farr from my sonne. He said that he was ready when I wolde so as I wolde assure him of his requeste.

He hath no desyre to be seen and waxeth angry when I speake to him of Wallcar and sayth that he will pluck his eares from his head, and that he lyeth; *for I asked him before of that, and what cause he had to complayne of some of the lords and to threaten them. He denyeth it, and sayth that he already prayed them to think no such matter of him.* As for myself he wold rather lose his lyfe than doo me the leaste displeasure; and then used so many kindes of flatteryes so coldly and wysely as you wold marvayle at. *I had forgotten that he sayde that he could not mistrust me for Hiegate's word, for he could not beleve, that his own flesh (which was myselfe) wold doo him any hurte;* and in deed it was seyd that I refused to have him lett bludd. *But for the others he wold at leaste sell his lyfe deare ynoughe;* but that he did suspecte nobody nor wolde, but *wolde love all that I did love.*

He wold not lett me go, but wold have me watche with him. I made as though I thought all to be true and that I wold think vpon it, and have excused myself from sytting up with him this nyght, for he sayth that he sleepith not. You have never heard him speake better nor more humbly; and if I had not proofe of his hart to be as waxe, and that myne were not as a dyamant, no stroke but comming from your hand could make me but to have pitie of him. But feare not for the place shall contynue till death. Remember also, in recompense therof, not to suffer yours to be won by that false race that wold do no lesse to your selfe.

I think they have bene at schoole togither. He hath allwais the teare in the eye. He saluteth every man, even to the meanest, and makith much of them, that they may take pitie of him. His father hath bled this daye at the nose and at the mouth. Gesse what token that is. I have not seene him; he is in his chamber. The King is so desyrous, that I shuld give him meate with my own hands, but trust you no more there where you are than I doo here.

This is my first journey; I will end to morrow. I write all, how little consequence so ever it be of, to the end that you may take

of the wholle that that shall be best for you to judge. I doo here a work that I hate muehe, but I had begon it this morning; had you not lyst to laugh, to see me so trymly make a lie, at the leaste dissemble, and to mingle truthe therewith? He hath almost told me all on the bishops behalfe and of Sutherland, without touching any word unto him of that which you had told me; but only by muehe flattering him and praying him to assure him selfe of me, and by my complayning of the bishop, I have taken the worms out of his nose. You have hard the rest.

We are tyed to by two false races. The good ycere untye us from them. God forgive me and God knytt us togither for ever for the most faythfull couple that ever he knytt together. This is my fayth; I will dye in it.

Excuse it, yf I write yll; you must gesse the one halfe. I cannot doo with all, for I am yll at ease, and glad to write unto you when other folkcs be a sleepc, seing that I cannot doo, according to my desyre, that is betwenc your armes my dear lyfe whom I besech God to preserve from all yll, and send you good rest as I go to seeke myne, till to morrow in the morning that will end my bible. But it greevith me, that it shuld lett me from wryting unto you of newes of myself so much I have to write.

Send me word what you have determinid heerupon, that we may know the one the others mynde for marryng of any thing.

I am weary, and am a sleepe, and yet I cannot forbear scribbling so long as ther is any paper. Curscd be this pocky fellow that troublith me thus muchc, for I had a pleasanter matter to discourse vnto you but for him. He is not muche the worse, but he is yll arrayed. I thought I shuld have bene kylld with his breth, for it is worse than your uncle's breth; and yet I was sett no nearer to him than in a chayr by his bolster, and he lyeth at the furdre syde of the bed.

The message of the Father by the waye.

The talk of Sir James of the ambassador.

That the Lard a Luss hath told me of the delaye.

The questions that he asked of Joehim.

Of my state.

Of my compayne.

Of the cause of my comming.

And of Joseph.

The talk that he and I haue had, and of his desyre to please me, of his repentance, and of thinterpretation of his letter.

Of Will Hiegate's doinges, and of his departure, and of the L. of Levinston.

I had forgotten of the L. of Levinston, that at supper he sayd

softly to the Lady Reres, that he dronk to the persons I knew if I wold pledge them. And after supper he sayd softly to me, when I was leaning vpon him and warming myselfe, " You may well go and see sick folkes, yet can you not be so welcom unto them as you have this daye left som body in payne who shall never be meary till he haue seene you agayne." I asked him who it was; he tooke me about the body and said " One of his folkes that hath left you this daye." Gesse you the rest.

This day I have wrought till two of the clock vpon this bracelet, to putt the keye in the clife of it, which is tyed with two laces. I have had so little tyme that it is very yll, but I will make a fayrer; and in the meane tyme take heed that none of those that be heere doo see it, for all the world wold know it, for I have made it in haste in theyr presence.

I go to my tedious talke. You make me dissemble so much that I am afrayde therof with horrour, and you make me almost to play the part of a traytor. Remember if it weare not for obeyeng I had rather be dead. My heart bleedith for yt. To be shorte, *he will not com but with condition that I shall promise to be with him as heretofore at bed and borde, and that I shall forsake him no more ; and upon my word he will doo whatsoever I will, and will com,* but he hath prayed me to tarry till after to morrow.

He hath spoken at the fyrst more stoutly, as this bearer shall tell you upon the matter of the Englishmen and of his departure ; but in the end he cometh to his gentlenes agayne.

He hath told me, among other talk, that he knew well, that my brother hath told me at Sterling that which he had said there, wherof he denied the halfe, and specially that he was in his chamber. But now to make him trust me I must fayne something vnto him; and therfore when he desyred me to promise that when he shuld be well we shuld make but one bed, I told him fayning to believe his faire promises, that if he did not change his mynd betwene this tyme and that, I was contented, so as he wold saye nothing therof; for (to tell it between us two) the Lordis wished no yll to him, but did feare lest, consydering the threateninges which he made in case we did agree together, he wold make them feel the small accompte they have made of him; and that he wold persuade me to poursue som of them, and for this respect shuld be in jelousy if at one instant, without their knowledge I did brake a game made to the contrary in their presence.

And he said unto me very pleasant and meary " Think you that they doo the more esteem you therfore? But I am glad that you talked to me of the Lordes. I hope that you desyre now that we shall lyve a happy lyfe; for if it weare otherwise, it could not be but

greater inconvenience shuld happen to us both than you think.
But I will doo now whatsoever you will have me doo, and will love all those that you shall love so as you make them to love me also. For so as they seek not my lyfe, I love them all egally." Therupon I have willed this bearer to tell you many prety things; for I have muche to write, and it is late, and I trust him upon your worde. To be short, he will go any where upon my word.

Alas! I have never deceived any body; but I remitt myself wholly to your will. And scnd me word what I shall doo, and whatsoever happen to me, I will obey you. Think also yf you will not fynd som invention more secret by phisick, for he is to take phisick at Cragmilla and the bathes also, and shall not com fourth of long tyme.

To be short, for that that I can learn he hath great suspicion, and yet, nevtherles trusteth upon my worde, but not to tell me as yet anything; howbeit, if you will that I shall avow him, I will know all of him; but I shall never be willing to beguile one that puttith his trust in me. Nevertheles you may doo all, and doo not estyme me the lesse therfore, for you are the cause therof. For, for my own revenge I wold not do it.

He giuith me certain charges (and these strong) of that that I fear evin to sayc that his faultes be published, but therc be that committ some secret faultcs and feare not to have them spoken of lowdely, and that ther is speeche of greate and small. *And even touching the Lady Reres, he said "God grant, that she serve you to your honour."* And that men may not think, nor he neyther, that myne owne power was not in myselfe, seeing I did refuse his offres. To conclude, for a suerety, he mistrustith vs of that that you know, and for his lyfe. But in the end, after I had spoken two or three good wordes to him, he was very meary and glad.

I have not sene him this night for ending your bracelet, but I can fynde no clasps for yt; it is ready therunto, and yet I feare least it should bring you yll happ, or that it shuld be known if you were hurte. Send me worde, whether you will have it and more monney, and whan I shall returne and how farre I may speak. Now as farr as I perccive I may doo much with you; gesse you whithir I shall not be suspected. As for the rest, he is wood when he hears of Ledinton, and of you and my brother. Of your brother he sayth nothing, but of the Earl of Arguile he doth; I am afraid of him to heare him talk, at the least he assurith himselfe that he hath no yll opinion of him. He speakith nothing of those abrode, nether good nor yll, but avoideth speaking of them. His father keepith his chamber; I have not seenc him.

All the Hamiltons be heere who accompany me very honestly.

All the friendes of the other doo come allwais when I go to visit him. He hath sent to me and prayeth me to see him rise to morrow in the morning early. To be short, this bearer shall declare unto you the rest; and if I shall learn anything, I will make every night a memoriall therof. He shall tell you the cause of my staye. Burn this letter, for it is too dangerous, neyther is there anything well said in it, for I think upon nothing but upon greefe, if you be at Edinborouge . . .

Now if to please you, my deere lyfe, I spare neither honor, conscience, nor hazard, nor greatnes, take it in good part, and not according to the interpretation of your false brother-in-law, to whom I pray you, give no credit against the most faythfull lover that ever you had or shall have.

See not also her whose faynid teares you ought not more to regarde then the true travails which I endure to deserve her place, for obteyning of which, against my own nature, I doo betray those that could lett me. God forgive me and give you, my only frend, the good luck and prosperitie that your humble and faythfull lover doth wishe vnto you, who hopith shortly to be other thing vnto you, for the reward of my paynes.

I have not made one worde, and it is very late, althoughe I shuld never be weary in wryting to you, yet will I end, kyssing of your handes. Excuse my evill wryting, and read it over twise. Excuse also that [I scribbled], for I had yesternight no paper when I took the paper of a memorial. [Pray] remcmber your frend, and wryte vnto her and often. Love me allw[ais as I shall love you.]

N.B. The Scots translation of this letter has the following memoranda subjoined to it:

Remember zow of the purpos of the Lady Reres.

Of the Inglysmen.

Of his mother.

Of the Erle of Argyle.

Of the Erle of Bothwell.

Of the ludgeing in Edinburgh.

APPENDIX C

TEXT OF THE SCANDAL LETTER

MADAME, suivant ce que je vous ay promis et avvez depuis désiré, je vous declare, ores qu'avecques regret que telles choses soyent ammenées en questions, mais tres sincèrement et sans aucqne passion, dont j'appelle mon Dieu a tesmoing, que la comtesse de Srewsbury m'a dit de vous ce qui suit au plus près de ces termes. A la pulpart de quoy je proteste avoir respondu, reprenant la ditte dame de croire ou parler si lissentieusement de vous, comme chose que je ne croyois point, ni croy à present, cognoissant le naturel de la comtesse et de quel esprit elle estoit alors poulsée contre vous.

Premièrement, qu'un, auquel elle disoit que vous aviez faict promesse de mariage devant une dame de vostre chambre, avoit couché infinies foys avvesques vous, avecque toute la licence et privaulté qui se peut user entre mari et famme; mais qu'indubitablement vous n'estiez pas comme les aultres femmes, et pour ce respect c'estiot follie à tous ceulx qu' affectoient vostre mariage avec M. le duc d'Anjou, d'autlant qu'il ne se pourroit accomplir, et que vous ne vouldriez jamais perdre la liberté de vous fayre fayre l'amour et avoir vostre plaisir toujours avecques nouveaux amour-eulx, régrettant, ce disoit elle, que vous ne vous contentiez de maister Haton et un aultre de ce royaulme; mais que, pour l'honneur du pays, il lui fashoit le plus que vous aviez non seulement, engagé vostre honneur avecques un estrangier nommé Simiert L'alant trouver de nuit en la chambre d'une dame, que la dicte comtesse blasmoit fort à ceste occasion làs où vous le baisier et usiez avec lui de diverses privautez deshonestes; mays aussi luy révéliez les segretz du royaulme, trahisant vos propres conseillers avecques luy. Que vous vous esties desportée de la mesme dissolution avec le Duc son maystre, qui vous avoit esté trouver une nuit à la porte de vostre chambre, où vous l'aviez rencontré avec vostre seulle chemise et manteau de nuit, et que par après vous l'aviez laissé entrer, et qu'il demeura avecques vous près de troys heures. Quant au dit Haton, que vous le couriez à force; faysant si publiquement paroistre l'amour que luy portiez, que luy mesmes

estoit constraint de s'en retirer, et que vous donnastes un soufflet à Killcgrev, pour ne vous avoir ramené le dit Haton que vous aviez envoyé rappeller par luy, s'estant desparti en chollerc d'avvecques vous, pour quelques injures que luy avviez ditte pour certains boutons d'or qu'il avvoit sur son habit. Qu'elle avoit travaillé de fayre espouser au dict Haton la feu comtesse de Lenox, sa fille, mays que de creinte de vous il n'i osoit entendre; que mesme le comte d'Oxford n'osoit ce rapproincer avecque sa femme, de peur de perdre la faveur qu'il espéroit pour vous fayre l'amour: que vous estiez prodigue envers toute telles gens et ceulx qui se mesloient de telles mcsnées; comme à un de vostre chambre, Gorges, auquel vous avviez donnié troy centz ponds de rente, pour vous avvoir apporté les nouvelles du retour de Hatton: qu'a toutz aultres vous estiez fort ingrate, chische, qu'il n'y avoit que troys ou quatre en vostre royaume à qui vous ayez jamais faict bien. Me conseillant, et riant extresmement, mettre mon filz sur les rancs pour vous fayre l'amours, comme chose qui me serviroyt grandement, et mettroit monsieur le Duc hors de quartier, qui me scroit très préjudisable si il y continuoit; et lui repliquant que cela scroyt pris pour une vraye mocquerie, elle me respondit que vous estiez si vayne et en si bonne opinion de vostre beauté, comme si vous estiez quelque déesse du ciel, qu'elle prendroit sur la teste de le vous faire croire facilement, et entretienctrioit mon filz en ceste humeur.

Que vous preniez sy grand plaisir en flatteries hors de toute raysons que l'on vous disoit, comme de dire, qu'on ne vous osoit par foys reguarder à plain, d'autant que vostre face luysoit comme le soleill, qu'elle et toutes les aultres dames de la cour estoient constreintes d'en user ainsi; et qu'en son dernier voyage vers vous, elle et la feue comtesse de Lenox, parlant à vous, n'osient s'entreregarded l'une et l'autre de peur de s'éclater de rire des cassades qu'elles vous donnoint, me priant à son retour de tancer sa fille qu'elle n'avoit jamays sceu persuader d'en fayre de mesme; et quand à sa fille Talbot, elle s'assuroyt qu'elle ne fauldroyt jamays de vous rire au nez. La dicte dame Talbot, lorsqu'elle vous alla fayre la révérance et donné le serment comme l'une de vos servantes, à son retour immédiatement, me la comtant comme une chose fayte en mocquerie, me pria de l'accepter pareill, mays plus ressent et entier vers moy, duquel je fiez long-temps refus; mais à la fin, à force de larmes, je la laissay fayre, disant qu'elle ne vouldroit pour chose au monde estre en vostre service pres de vostre personne, d'autant qu'elle avoit peur que, quand seriez en chollere, ne luy fissiez comme à sa cousine Skedmur, à qui vous avviez rompu un doibt, faciant à croire à ceulx de la court que c'estoit un chandellier qui estoit tombé dessubz; et qu'à une aultre,

vous servant à table, avviez donné un graud coup de cousteau sur la mayn: en un mot, pour ces derniers pointz et communs petits rapportz, croyez que vous estiez jouée et contrefaicté par elles comme en comédie. Entre mes fammes mesmes; ce qu'apperevant, je vous jure que je déffendis à mes fammes de ne ce plus mesler.

Davantage la dicte comtesse m'a autrefoys adverte que vous vouliez appointer Rolson, pour me fayre l'amour et essayer de me déshonorer, soyt en effect ou par mauvais bruit, de quoy il avoyt instructions de vostre bousche propre: que Ruxby veint ice, Il y a environ viii ans, pour atempter à me vie ayant parle à vous-mesme, qui luy avviez dit qu'il fist se à quoi Walsingham luy commanderoit et dirigeroit. Quand la dicte comtesse poursuivoit le mariage de son filz Charles avecque une des niepces de milord Paget, et que d'autre part vous vouliez l'avoir par pure et absolue auctorite pour un des Knolles, pour ce qu'il estoit vostre parent; elle croioit fort contre vous, et disoit que c'estoit une vraye tyrannie, voulant a vostre fantasie enlever toutes les héritières du pays, et que vous aviez indignement usé le dict Paget par parolles injurieuses; mais qu'enfin, la noblesse de ce royaume ne le vous soufriroit pas, mesmement si vous (vous) adressiez à telz aultres qu'ell connoissoit bien.

Il y a environ quatre ou sinq ans que, vous estant malade et moy aussy au mesme temps, elle me dit que vostre mal provenoit de la closture d'une fistulle que vous aviez dans une jambe; et que sans doubt, venant à perdre vos moys, vous mourriez bientost, s'en resjouissant sur une vayne imagination qu'elle a eue de long-temps par les prédictions d'un nomme John Lenton, et d'un vieulx livvre qui prédisoit vostre mort par violence, et la succession d'un aultre, royne qu'elle interprétoit estre moy, regrettant seulement que par le dict livvre, il estoit prédit que la royne qui vous debvroit succéder, ne règneroit que trois ans, et mourroit comme vous par violence, ce qui estoit représenté mesme en peinture dans le dict livvre, auquel il y avoit un dernier feuillet, le contenu duquel elle ne m'a jamays voulu dire. Elle scait mesme que j'ay toujours pris cela pour une pure follie, mais elle fesoit si bien son compte d'estre la première aupres de moy, et mesmement que mon filz épouseroit ma niepce Arbella.

Pour la fin, je vous jure encore un coup, sur ma foy et mon honneur, que ce que desubz est très véritable, et que, de ce qui conserne vostre honneur, il ne m'estjamays tombé en l'entendement, de vous fayre tort par le reveller, et qu'il ne ce scaura jamays par moy, le tenant pour très faulx. Si je puis avoir cest heur de parler à vous, je vous diray plus particulièrement les noms, tems, lieux et

aultres circonstances, pour vous fayre cognoistre la vérité et de
censi et d'aultres choses que je réserve, quant je seray tout à fayct
asseurée de vostre amitié; laquelle comme je désire plus que jamays,
aussi, si je la puis ceste foys obtenir, vous n'eustes jamays parente,
amye, ni mesme subjet, plus fidèle et affectionné que je vous le
seray. Pour Dieu, assurez vous de celle qui vous veult et peult
servir.

De mon lit, forçant mon bras et mes douleurs pour vous satis-
fayre et obéir.

MARIE R.

INDEX

A

ANJOU, Duke of, 153
Argyll, Countess of, 74
Argyll, Earl of, 58, 59, 60, 73, 94,
95, 96, 106, 115
Arran, Earl of, 23, 41
Atholl, Duke of 61, 77, 115

B

BABINGTON, Anthony, 204, 206,
208, 210, 211, 214, 220, 231
Babington Plot, 166, 207, 211
Balfour, Sir James, 78, 96, 106, 122
Ballard, 207, 233
Beale, Robert, 180, 190, 191, 226,
240, 247, 250, 252, 256
Bedford, Earl of, 40, 61, 70, 110
Bellenden, Sir John, 123
Bond of Association, 194, 203, 208,
211, 223, 224, 227, 245, 246
Book of Discipline, 28, 30

Bothwell, Earl of, 25, 47; re-called from exile, 60; lieutenant-general of the Marches, 61; 77, 79, 84; all-powerful at Court, 86; reconciled to Moray, 87; and Lethington, 89; warns Mary against Moray, 87; 88; wounded at Hermitage, visited by Mary, 91; at Jedburgh, 93; at Craigmillar conference, 94; Mary's favourite minister, 98; accused of Darnley's murder, 101; tried and acquitted, Lords sign marriage-band, 102; abducts and rapes Mary, 102; obtains divorce, 103; created

Earl of Orkney, marries Mary, goes to Borthwick with her, 103; escapes to Haddington, raises army, at Carberry Hill, 104; rides away to Dunbar, 105; alleged letter from Mary, 115

Bourgoing, 219, 220, 221, 224,
227, 245, 252, 254

Boyd, Lord, 73

Buchanan, 109

Buckhurst, Lord, 240, 242, 243,
245

Burghley, William Cecil, Lord, 17,
30, 40, 43, 51, 70, 142, 145,
152, 154, 169, 170, 193, 211,
226, 227, 228, 232, 238, 245,
247, 260

C

CALVIN, John, 22, 31

Carberry Hill, 104

Casket Letters, 117; examination of circumstances of discovery, authenticity, etc., 121-9; 193

Catherine of Medici, 33, 48, 72

Catholics, acts against, 25, 33, 34,
36; 42, 64

Cecil, William (*see* Lord Burghley)

Chastelard, 72

Châteauneuf, 202

Châtelhérault, Duke of, 60, 115

Cherelles, 165, 202

Cockburn of Ormistoun, 25

Craigmillar Castle, Council Conference for Darnley's removal, 94 *et seq.*; Darnley murder-band signed, 96

Crawford, Captain Thomas, "De-position," 133; 134, 135, 150; text, 265
 Curle, secretary to Mary, 208, 212, 219, 220, 222, 239

D

DALGLEISH, George, 123, 127
 Darnley, Henry Lord, 51; goes to Scotland, 52; favoured by Mary, 52; Elizabeth demands return, 53; his unkingly qualities, 54; plot for his murder or exile, 57-8; married to Mary, 59; betrays weak character, 63; attitude to Riccio, 66; alienates himself from Mary, demands crown-matrimonial, 68; alleges Mary's infidelity with Riccio, 70; 71, 72; joins Riccio murder plot, 73; 74, 77, 78, 79; betrays confederates to Mary, 82; escapes with her to Dunbar, 82-3; 84; innocence of Riccio murder proclaimed, jealousy of Bothwell's ascendancy, 86; threatens to kill Moray, 89; threatens to leave Scotland, 90; visits Mary at Jedburgh, 92; offers himself as Catholic champion to Spain and Rome, 93; Council confer on his removal, 95; goes to Glasgow, taken ill, 98; returns to Edinburgh, lodges at Kirk-o'-Field, 100; found murdered, 101
 Davison, Secretary, 211, 226, 238, 244, 246, 247, 248, 260, 261
 De Foix, 70
 De Poictiers, Diane, 15
 De Préau, priest, 198, 222
 De Quadra, 49
 Don Carlos of Spain, 49, 72
 Douglas, Archibald, 215, 216, 248
 Douglas, George, 119, 214

Drury, Sir William, 156
 Drymen, 98
 Du Croc, 90, 97, 104

E

ECLINTON, Lord, 102
 Elizabeth, Queen, determined on Mary's ruin, 17; 33; political grounds of enmity, 39 *et seq.*; agrees meeting with Mary, 43; influence on Mary's marriage plans, 48; suggests Earl of Leicester as husband, 50; allows Darnley to go to Scotland, 52; offends Mary by familiarity with Leicester, 53; anger at proposed Darnley marriage, orders Lennox and Darnley to return, 53; promises Moray help in rebellion, 54; intercedes for Moray, 59; reproves him for rebelling, 62; 84; her part in York, Hampton Court, and Westminster conferences, 125-9; retains Mary a prisoner, 140; her broken promises, 141; refuses to meet Mary, 142; pretexts for imprisoning Mary, 142; executes Northumberland and ravages Scottish borders, 151; projects marriage with Duke of Anjou, 153; offers Mary to Scots for execution, 155; sends Morton armed help against Edinburgh Castle, 156; pretended treaty negotiations for Mary's release, 169; bids Mary pay her own expenses, 176; accuses Burghley of being Mary's partisan, 177; encourages Mary-Shrewsbury scandal, 191; James pleads with her for Mary's life, 216; pensions James, 214; decides on Mary's trial, 225; orders Mary to answer commissioners, 228; vacillates as to

sentencing Mary, 239; pretended reluctance to sign death-warrant, 243-4; signs death-warrant, 246; wishes Poulet to murder Mary, 246; her rage, and discretion, after Mary's execution, 260-2; her letter to James on execution, 261
Erskine, Hon. Arthur, 74, 82

Hay, John, 54
Henderson, T. F., 129, 134
Hereford, Lord, 149, 168
Herries, Lord, 141
Hosack, 129
Hume, Lord Alexander, 104
Hume, David, 129
Huntingdon, Lord, 149, 167, 168
Hunty, Earl of, 25, 35

F

FRANCIS II, Knox on his death, 18; seal forged, 25; 41
Froude, J. A., 129

J

JAMES, I and VI, birth, 87; under guardianship of Earl of Mar, 89; succeeds Mary, 117; 159, 160, 166, 168, 178, 195, 213-17, 261
Jedburgh, assize at, 91; Mary's ride from, to Hermitage, 91-2

G

GIFFORD, Gilbert, 203, 204, 205, 207, 211
Glasgow, Archbishop of, 173, 204, 205, 211, 240, 242
Glasgow Letter, text, 269-75
Glencairn, Lord, 73, 115
Goodall, 129
Gordon, Lady Jane (Countess of Bothwell), 103
Gordon, Lord, 59; made Earl of Huntly, 66; 77, 79, 84, 94, 95, 96, 106
Gorges, Sir Thomas, 219, 220, 224
Gray, Master of, 215, 216, 260
Guise, Cardinal of, 14, 15, 48, 49, 177
Guise, Duke of, 14, 44, 50
Guise, Mary of, 18, 19

K

KENT, Earl of, 247, 250, 251, 255, 258
Killigrew, 155
Kirkcaldy of Grange, 59, 104, 115, 150, 156
Knollys, Sir Francis, 141
Knox, John, religious hate of Mary, 18; on deaths of Mary of Guise and Francis II, 18-19; interview with Mary, 19; career to 1561, 19-23; Cranmer's judgment of him, 20; causes Marian persecutions, 21; repudiated by Calvin, 22; preaches against Mary, 24; 25, 29, 31; his politico-religious power, 32; 36, 37, 45; attacks Mary's morals and Court, 46; encourages Moray to rebel, 54; 65; flees to hiding after Riccio's murder, 85; prays for Mary's recovery from Jedburgh illness, 92; 116, 118; death, 156

H

HAMILTON, Lord Claude, 104
Hampton Court conference, 126-9
Hatton, Sir Christopher, 228

L

LABANOFF, Prince, 210
 Lang, Andrew, 24, 95, 129, 134,
 215, 216
 Leicester, Robert Dudley, Earl of,
 50, 51, 52, 70, 149, 226
 Lennox, Countess of, 51, 58, 73,
 177
 Lennox, Earl of (d'Aubigny), 165
 Lennox, Earl of, 51, 57-8, 73, 90,
 96, 115, 171
 Lennox Papers, 95
 Lethington, Maitland of, on Mary's
 Council, 25; 29; his Anglo-
 Scottish policy, 33; 41, 43;
 negotiates for Spanish marriage,
 49; 50, 54, 60; eclipse by
 Riccio, 67; 73; retires to
 Atholl, 86; reconciled to Both-
 well, 89; at Craigmillar con-
 ference, 94; signed Darnley
 murder-band, 96; 106, 117;
 probable forger of Casket Letters,
 124-39; proposes Norfolk
 marriage, 147; 150; death,
 156
 Lindsay, Lord, 104, 117
 Livingston, Lord, 58
 Lochleven Castle, 105, 118, 119
 Lochleven, Lord, 104, 119

M

MAR, Earl of, 88, 104, 115, 153,
 155
 Mary Queen of Scots, outline of
 career, 13-14; girlhood in
 France, 14; accomplishments,
 appearance, character, 15; gifts
 of royal rights to France, 16;
 Throckmorton's estimate, re-
 fuses ratify Treaty of Edinburgh,
 17; refused safe conduct by
 Elizabeth, 17; lands at Leith,
 18; amnesty to rebels, 26; her
 religious tolerance, 26, 29-38;

Lords hope for her conversion,
 30; suppresses the Gordons,
 34-5; foreign policy, 41; suc-
 cection negotiations with Eliza-
 beth, 42; proposes meeting
 with Elizabeth, 43; meeting
 postponed, 44; negotiations for
 second husband, 48; her suitors,
 inmatch with Don Carlos aban-
 doned, 49; Elizabeth suggests
 Earl of Leicester, 50; restores
 Lennox estates, 51; abandons
 Leicester, decides to marry Darn-
 ley, 52-3; her deposition pro-
 jected, 57; marries Darnley,
 59; measures to subdue Moray's
 rebellion, 59; defeats Moray
 utterly, 61; determines on
 Catholic restoration, appeals to
 Pope and Spain, 63; advances
 Riccio, 66; her alleged rela-
 tions with Riccio, the allegations
 examined, 69-72; pregnant,
 69; Riccio murdered, 75; im-
 prisoned in Holyrood, 79; out-
 wits Darnley and Lords, 80-1;
 escapes to Dunbar, 82-3; par-
 dons Moray, 85; estranged
 from Darnley, gives birth to
 Prince James, 87; Exchequer
 House legend, 90; goes to Jed-
 burgh assizes, 91; rides to see
 Bothwell, serious illness, life
 despaired of, 92; at Craigmillar
 Castle, declines Lords'
 plans for removal of Darnley by
 divorce, etc., 94-5; baptism of
 Prince James, 96-7; pardons
 Morton and Riccio plotters, 97;
 lascivious behaviour with Both-
 well alleged, 99; visits Darnley
 at Glasgow, 99; at Kirk-o'-
 Field with Darnley, 100; offers
 reward for Darnley's murderer,
 101; abducted and raped by
 Bothwell, 102-3; marries Both-
 well, 103; at Haddington,
 Dunbar and Carberry Hill, 104;

parts from Bothwell, surrenders to rebels, 105; truth regarding abduction and rape, 110 *et seq.*; alleged letter to Bothwell, imprisoned in Lochleven Castle, 115; execution demanded, 117; signs abdication, 117; her suitors at Lochleven, first attempted escape, legends of progeny at Lochleven, 119; her escape, battle of Langside, enters England, 120; accused of Darnley murder at conferences, 125-9; imprisoned at Bolton and Tutbury, 142; marriage with Duke of Norfolk proposed, 147; appeals to Spain for armed help, 149; Northern Rising crushed, 150; treaty negotiations for release with Elizabeth, 152; Bothwell marriage annulled, 152; her execution called for, 154; situation after Ridolfi plot, 157-62; her hopes from Spain, 162-6; Guise-Lennox plot, 165; conditions of imprisonment under Shrewsbury, 167-95; several plots discovered, 171; probable foreknowledge of St. Bartholomew's massacre, 173; at Buxton, 176; wishes James sent to France, 178; famous letter to Elizabeth, 180-90; terms for her release, 190; accused of having children by Shrewsbury, 191; threatens to publish "Scandal Letter," 193; offers to sign Bond of Association, 194; in Poulet's charge, 197; harsher treatment, 198; seriously ill at Tutbury, 199; removed to Chartley, 202; Walsingham's plot to trap her, 203-5; letter to Babington intercepted, 207; tamperings with letter, 209; removal to Tixall, 218-21; removed to Fotheringhay, 224; denies assassination plot, 225; attends trial under protest, 229; the trial, 231-7; verdict of guilty, 239; hears sentence of death, 230; preparations for execution, 252-3; her execution, 253-60.

Melville, Andrew, 50, 51, 103

Melville, Robert, 60

Mendoza, 165, 206, 207, 211, 242

Methuen, Paul, 30

Mewtas, Sir Peter, 42, 43

Mildmay, Sir Walter, 152, 169, 180, 191, 192, 196, 226

Moray, Earl of, seeks Elizabeth's aid to supplant Mary, 23; suggests Mary's capture on voyage from France, 23; on Mary's Council, 25; 28; receives earldom, 35; 40; his early activities, 41; opposes Darnley marriage, decides upon rebellion, 54; true motives for rebellion, 56; outlawed by Mary, 59; in open rebellion, 60; flees to England, defeated, 61; spreads Riccio-Mary rumours, 69; plots Riccio murder with Darnley, 73; returns after Riccio murder, 79; 81, 84; pardoned by Mary, 85; reconciled to Bothwell, 87; debates Darnley's removal with Council, 94; beginning of plot for removal of Darnley, Mary and Bothwell, 98; sails for France before Bothwell's trial, 102; returns to Scotland, appointed Regent, 117; accuses Mary of murder at York and Hampton Court, 125; betrays Northumberland, is murdered by Hamilton of Bothwellhaugh, 150

Morgan, 196, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206

Morton, Earl of, 60, 69, 73, 84, 87, 97, 106, 115, 150, 155, 156, 175, 180

INDEX

N

NAU, Claude, 81, 83, 117, 119, 177, 178, 208, 211, 212, 219, 220, 239

Norfolk, Duke of, 145, 147, 149, 153, 154

Northern Rising, 150

Northumberland, Duke of, 63, 149, 150, 151

O

OCHILTREE, Lord, 73

P

PHELIPPE, 204, 206, 207, 211, 225, 238

Philip II of Spain, 160, 163, 165, 207

Poulet, Sir Amyas, 119, 194, 196, 197, 198, 199, 201, 203, 204, 206, 218, 219, 222, 223, 239, 243, 246, 247, 256

R

RANDOLPH, 43, 58, 69, 70, 72, 110

Riccio, David, engaged for Mary's choir, 47; appointed Mary's foreign secretary, becomes a power at Court, Mary's chief confidential adviser, 66; rumoured immoral relations with Mary, 69; 72; assassination, 74

Ridolphi, Robert, 153, 154, 171

Ross, Bishop of, 104, 152, 153, 170, 171

Rothes, Lord, 73

Ruthven, Lord, 69, 73, 74, 84

S

SADLER, Sir Ralph, 194, 196, 197, 198, 202

St. Bartholomew's Eve massacre, 154, 173-4

Scandal Letter, text, 277-80

Shrewsbury, Countess of, 177, 191, 192

Shrewsbury, Earl of, 119, 149, 151, 167-95, 196, 225, 247, 250, 255, 256, 259

Somers, John, 194, 196

Stewart, Arabella, 177, 192

Stewart, Lord James (*see* Moray, Earl of)

Stewart, Lord Robert, 74

T

THOMWORTH, John, 59

Throckmorton, Elizabeth's French Ambassador, 17, 41, 53, 72, 110, 117, 119

Treaty of Edinburgh, 17, 18, 42, 152, 226

Tullibardine, Lord, 104

W

WAAD, William, 1902, 198, 222

Walsingham, Sir Francis, 160, 164, 165, 166, 195, 196, 197, 199, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 211, 217, 223, 226, 230, 233, 239, 246, 260

Whittaker, 129

Wood, John, 124, 125, 126, 130, 131, 142

Y

YORK conference, 125-6

